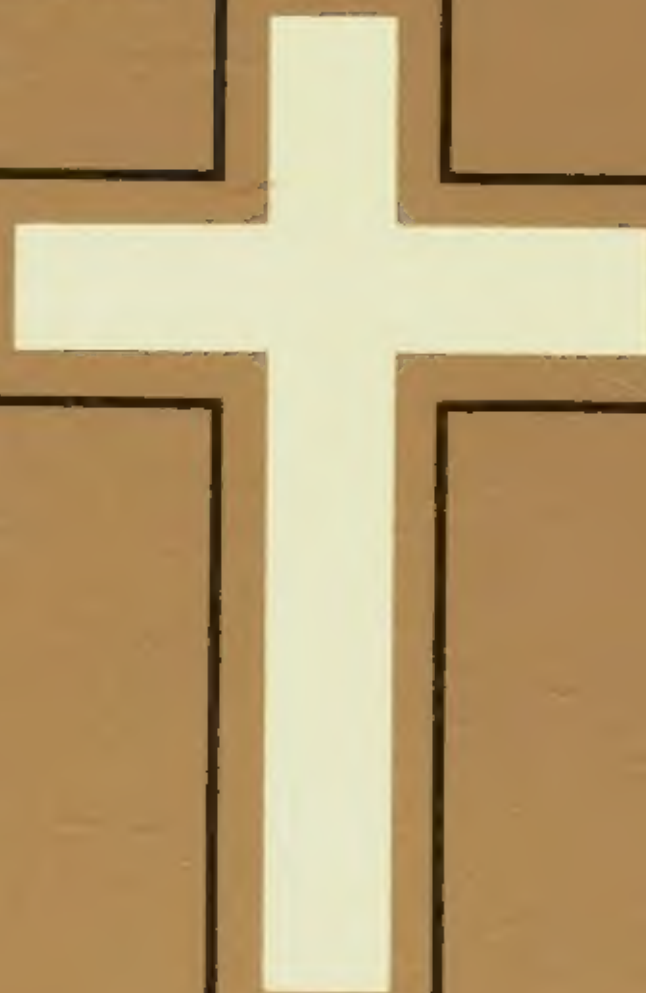
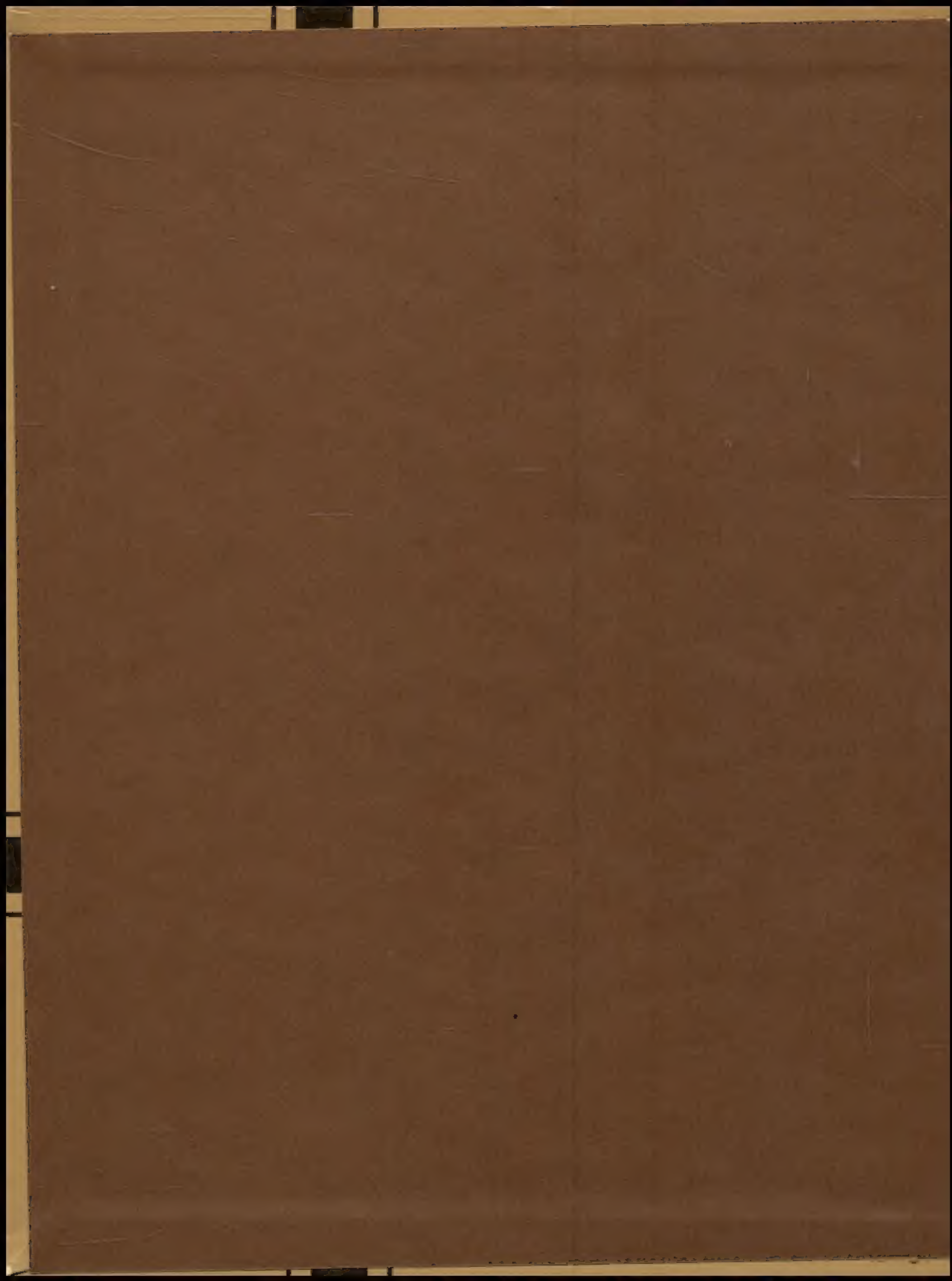


**1855-1980**

**ST. MARY'S PARISH**

**125TH ANNIVERSARY**











THE 125TH YEAR  
OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH,  
SANDUSKY, OHIO

An Account of the Life  
of the People  
of this Parish  
in the Year 1980



*This book is gratefully dedicated  
To the people of our parish  
Builders of Gods kingdom  
yesterday - today - tomorrow  
People who are the church  
a community of faith  
St. Mary's Parish*

*-The Rev. Robert W. Donnelly*



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# Introduction

This book is about a year in the life of St. Mary's Parish, a very special year, our 125th year. It is not a history book, nor was it intended to be one. The time it is most concerned with is now, and its subject is us. We have attempted to present in these pages a look into our life as a community of Christians living in the city of Sandusky in the state of Ohio in the United States of America in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty.

All of us have contributed to the book. The writing, editing, photography, typing, research, interviewing, design work were done by St. Mary's parishioners. So many people worked so hard to create it that all an editor can say is thank you. It is not easy to put together a book about yourselves. The subject and the author are the same. We are in the pictures; the words are our words. The parish is our parish.

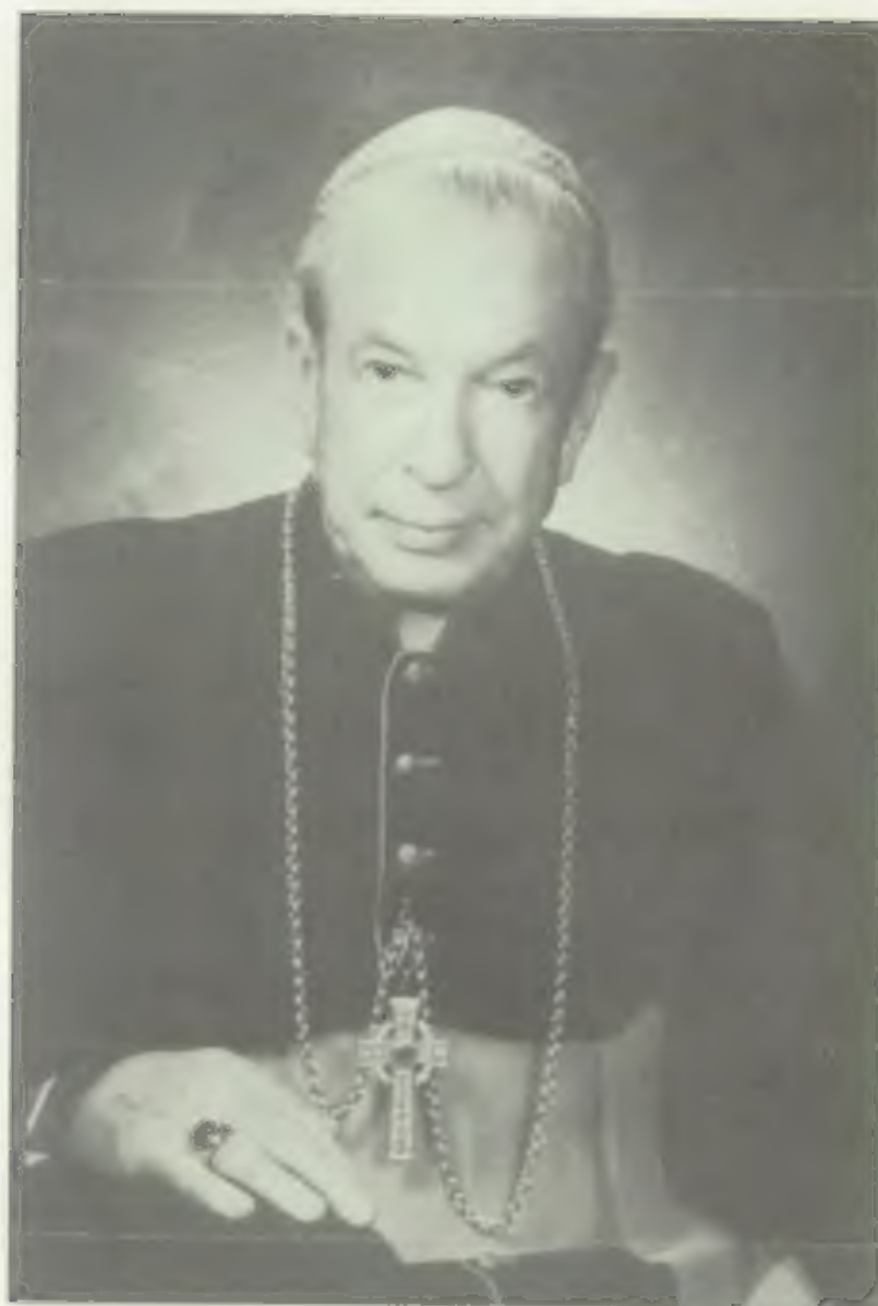
The authors of the articles worked diligently to be as factually correct as the records allowed them to

be. The photographers attempted to say in pictures what is difficult to say in words.

The staff asks that you read and interpret the book as one which puts the life of St. Mary's Parish into perspective — its part in the community, its part in your lives, its part in the lives of your family, neighbors and friends.

The idea for the book began as a discussion with the Rev. Robert W. Donnelly and his concern for making the 125th year of the Parish and the 100th year of the church building a special year for all of us. He felt an important part of the celebration should be a special remembrance of the year and interpreted that to mean a book should be published to commemorate the event.

He left it to his parishioners to structure, write, edit and photograph the parish. We have done that; we have done it with dedication and pride. And we hope all who read this book will feel the special spirit of St. Mary's Parish.



**THE MOST REVEREND JOHN A. DONOVAN**  
*Bishop of the 19-county Catholic Diocese of Toledo*

Bishop of Toledo  
2544 Parkwood Avenue  
Toledo, Ohio 43610

Office of the Bishop

July 15, 1980

Rev. Robert W. Donnelly  
Pastor, St. Mary's Parish  
429 Central Avenue  
Sandusky, Ohio 44870

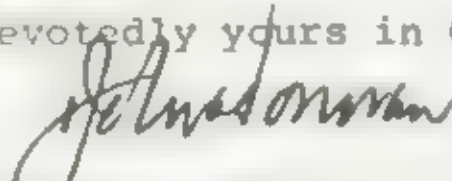
Dear Father Donnelly:

I have learned with pleasure that St. Mary's Parish is currently celebrating the 125th year of its existence and the 100th year of the completion of its present church building. These are certainly days for rejoicing as well as for thanksgiving, and I look forward to participating in the eucharistic celebration of these occasions on December 7th.

One of the most salutary results of a celebration of this kind is the spirit of unity and community which it emphasizes. This is a blessing to be treasured by any parish, but especially by one so venerable as St. Mary's. I prayerfully hope that your parish will continue to be blessed in this fashion as its parishioners renew their efforts to live as favored children of our Almighty Father.

Invoking on you and your associates, your staff and all the parishioners of St. Mary's an abundance of divine blessings, I am

Devotedly yours in Christ,



Bishop of Toledo

**St. Mary's 1980:  
Pictures  
And  
A Prayer**



*May St. Mary's be a source of love and life for all  
its members, because it is a living community  
that portrays the very essence of Christ.*

*May clergy, religious and laity all work together  
to minister to the needs of all.*

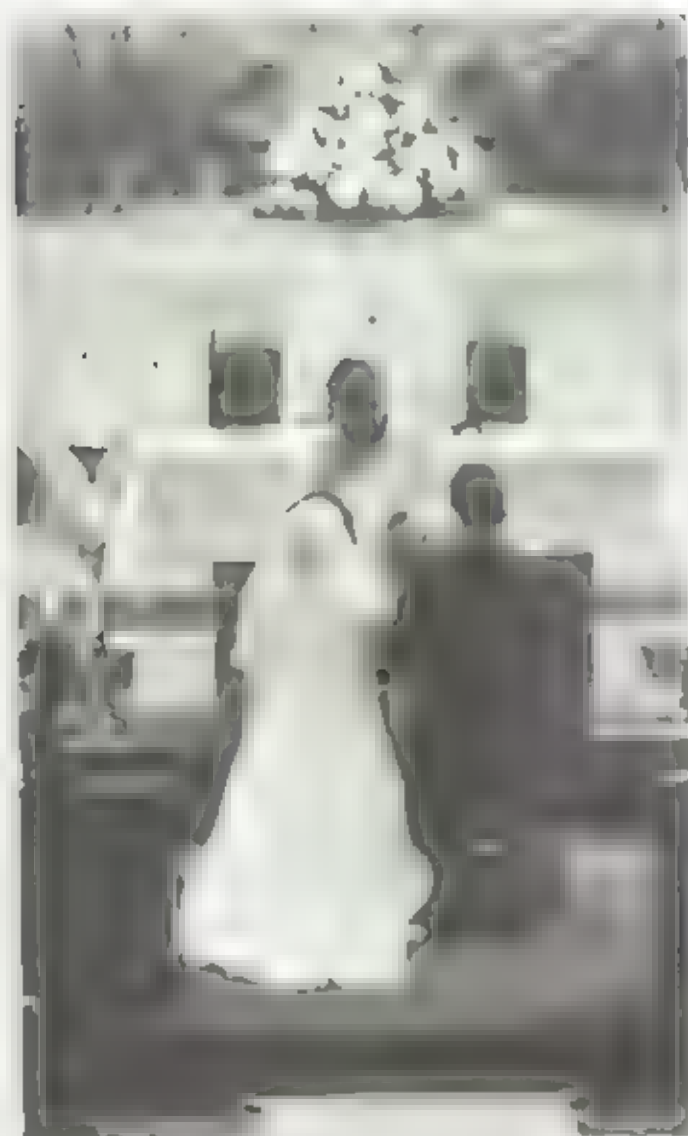
*May our liturgical celebrations be expressions  
of living faith, a faith that does not separate  
church and life.*

*Or to put it another way, may St. Mary's Parish be*

— a place  
of celebration



— a place of  
birth,  
life,  
death



— a place of reconciliation







*— a place  
of  
strengthening*



— a place of prayer





— a place of joy





*- a place of brotherhood*





— a place of refuge





— a place  
of  
healing



— a place of identity





— a place  
of  
family

*Sister Mary Bernita*





**Building  
A  
Parish**



# Our History

The beginnings of St. Mary's Parish can be traced to the beginnings of Catholicism. And, we are fortunate to be able to recognize our beginnings in this area called Sandusky with the help of previous historians who better understood our Christian heritage.

The amazing part of tracing this history of our church is to note the problems that others were forced to face. These problems were at times spiritual and at times economic. The problems of building churches, obtaining priests, and crossing language barriers all with the sole purpose of worshipping Jesus Christ were obstacles that had to be dealt with.

We as the current makers of history can reflect and realize that the problems that we may now face as a parish and as a people of God are in ways similar to our ancestors. We are faced with the current tasks of maintaining the Church, the school, and the continuing spiritual growth of parishioners. By reflecting upon the accomplishments of the past we can then link ourselves to that past. We can become mirrors to the accomplishments and can gain that connecting link which grows into a pride in being a people of God.

Our struggles are no less important than the struggles of our ancestors and for us to continue, we must grasp that spirit which has enabled us to reach this point and to reach for new goals to become the pioneers of the future.

The first Catholics to settle in this region were Indians from the Huron tribe. In 1749 they settled on the shores of Sandusky Bay calling their village "Ostandooske," which means, "there the water is pure." They were ministered by Jesuit missionaries from Detroit and Canada.

In 1751, a second settlement of Catholic Indians the Wyandots, under Chief Oruntondi, was established in the territory of Sandusky. Their spiritual advisor was a Jesuit named the Rev. John de la Richards. Because of Oruntondi's dislike for the French and his strong sympathies for the English, Father Richards and those who shared his labors had to be withdrawn from the territory. The Jesuit priests soon returned and resumed their missionary labors in Erie County.

The first permanent church in the Sandusky area was a simple log cabin erected and dedicated to divine service in 1749.

The Catholic movement continued to grow until 1773 when the anti-Catholic sentiment that was being expressed in Europe made its way to the new world. Many missions were forced to close. For the next 50 years, there was a continuing loss of faith and spiritual desolation mounted.

However, by 1829, the Catholic movement was born again when immigrants who were exiles from Europe made their way to the United States. The Redemptorist Fathers, who settled in Peru, Huron County, expanded their scope taking over the spiritual direction of Sandusky's new colony of immigrants.



The new immigrants were led by the Rev. F X Tschenhens. While they were poor and could not afford a church, they were spiritually rich and shared their homes in order to enjoy the celebration of the Divine Mysteries.

In 1839, the Sandusky mission was attended by



priests coming from Tiffin on horseback. Best known among the self-sacrificing priests was Father Machebeuf, who later became the first Bishop of Denver, Colorado. Father Machebeuf became the first resident pastor of the Sandusky immigrants in 1840. He conducted services in the old Customs House while working for the erection of a new church.

The first actual parish, Holy Angels, was established in 1841. It is known as the "venerable Mother Church of Sandusky." From Holy Angels grew Sts. Peter and Paul and St. Mary's parishes.

The cornerstone of Holy Angels was laid in 1841 and the church was completed a year later. It served as the first church with a resident pastor.

The spirit of the new parish was enthusiastic. In a letter dated Feb. 12, 1846, Father Machebeuf expressed his joy. "Our beautiful little church has been finished since the first Sunday of Advent; and the steeple and spire were completed and the bell hung in time for Christmas. I have never seen our people in better spirits. When I was telling them a few weeks before Christmas that I expected to find a man of good will who would volunteer to go to Toledo for the bell, one of them by an excess of good will, forgot he was in church and cried out immediately, 'Say, Priest, I'll go tomorrow,' and he kept his word."

The Migration of Nations in Europe to the new world continued. Immigrants from Germany began pouring into Sandusky in 1841. A good many of them were Catholics. It was only natural that they would be led to Holy Angels which served as the only parish at that time. New problems faced the little church. Not only did this little church need more ministering, but it also needed priests who were able to speak German.

This caused the members of Holy Angels parish to petition the "Pioneer Bishop," the saintly Amadeus Rappe of Cleveland, to build another parish. There was no time lost in issuing this request. Bishop Rappe sent the German immigrants the Rev. J. N. Conlan and allowed the immigrants to use Holy Angels until they could erect their own church. The Rev. Deacon Felix M. Boff was also sent to Sandusky to instruct and to preach to the immigrants in German. (Rev. Deacon Boff later became a Monsignor and ruled the Cleveland diocese as Apostolic Administrator.)







Eager to start building their own church, the German immigrants began to look for a site to erect their house of worship. Thus, St. Mary's Parish began

In 1854, the Rev. James Harmene was appointed pastor of St. Mary's. Father Harmene worked to begin the construction of a new church. With the help of men such as N J. Buyer, H. Lutz, B. Icsman, B. Schenk, J. Wernert, M. Ott, L. Cable and G. Homegardner, the parish was able to purchase two lots on Jefferson and Decatur streets for \$1,900.

Under Father Harmene a small church, the first pastoral residence and a frame school were built. When he was transferred, he left the parish in excellent condition.

St. Mary's Parish continued to grow. More and more immigrants continued to come to Sandusky and their German heritage led them to the parish. In 1873 St. Mary's pastor, the Rev. Nicholas Moes,

laid the foundation for construction of a new church. The cornerstone was laid in October, 1873, by Bishop Gilmour. The economic conditions of the country forced the parish to build the church at a slower pace.

There were 400 families in the parish. Many were very poor. Nevertheless, the church was constructed and the parishioners were able to pay off all but \$10,000 of the construction cost. The church was completed and dedicated on Nov. 28, 1880, to "The Mother of Sorrows."

When Father Moes resigned in October, 1888, the growing parish was only \$6,000 in debt. He was regarded as a great preacher, instructor, builder and financier. He had enabled the parish to gain pride in its labors and in the worship of God.

St. Mary's continued to expand. Under the Rev. J. Heidegger, groups such as the Christian Mothers and the Altar Society were founded. He also initiated

ed construction of the parochial residence which was three stories high, contained 20 rooms and cost \$12,000. Two additional side altars were placed in the church during this period

In 1893 the Rev. S. Rebholz replaced Father Herdegger and finished the tasks that he started. It was also under Father Rebholz's residency that the Ladies of the Sacred Heart of Mary were replaced by the Sisters of Notre Dame

In 1898 Father Rebholz had the entire interior of the church renovated. The renovation included the addition of lights. The old candelabras were replaced with 1,100 gas and electric lights making the church one of the most brilliantly illuminated churches in the country

A new organ was also installed at a cost of \$5,000. In September, Professor Eugene Bonn of Rochester, N.Y., directed a concert in the church. He was accompanied by a chorus of 60 voices

The total cost of the improvements was \$11,000. The debt was paid in two years by the members of the parish

Between the years 1902 and 1908 the Rev. Joseph S. Widmann was pastor of the parish. Known as a kind and tireless worker, he worked hard to build a new school

With \$20,000 on hand, he took it upon himself to embark on this adventure. He began the building of the schoolhouse with new boiler rooms to be added for effective heating

The final cost of the construction project was \$113,400. Paying the balance of this cost was a struggle for the parish. During the eight years of Father Widmann's pastorate, he was able to raise \$20,000 to help defray the deficit. However, this still left a debt of \$80,000 which was turned over to Father Widmann's successor, Monsignor William C. Zierolf

Monsignor Zierolf's accomplishments were many. He was very progressive and a staunch supporter and leader in the Catholic community. His main goal was to pay off the parish debt. Through his hard work, this was accomplished

With the debt paid, Monsignor Zierolf continued to expand the school. A staunch believer in Catholic education, it was through his efforts the school began to expand and its facilities were modernized. He was also responsible for construction of the school gym. His loyal support of the school also prompted

him to start the St. Mary's High School newspaper, "The Bell"

Monsignor Zierolf was instrumental in purchasing the 60-acre site which is Calvary Cemetery. His thoughtfulness and foresight have enabled St. Mary's Parish to enjoy its present level of success

It was also under his direction that the church received a new look. Redecoration received a priority. It was during this redecoration that the G. A. Boeckling organ was donated

The Sorroful Mother Novena services were introduced into the parish in 1940 by Monsignor Zierolf. On Sept. 28, 1938, he was raised to the dignity of a domestic prelate. The Rev. Cornelius Dobmeyer became his assistant in 1935 and during the later years of Monsignor Zierolf's administration Father Dobmeyer took charge of many parish activities

The Monsignor died on Sept. 16, 1953. Shortly after his death Father Dobmeyer was appointed pastor of St. Patrick Church, Bascom, Ohio





In October, 1953, Bishop George J. Rehring appointed the Rev. Joseph Inkrott to be the pastor of St. Mary's Parish.

This assignment was full of challenge. There were immediate projects to be dealt with. They included renovation of the rectory, construction of an annex to join the rectory to the church; replacement of the powerhouse with a baptistry; making a north entrance to the transept; planning for renovation of the church, and acquiring property for grade school expansion.

Pope Pius XII designated 1954 the "Marian Year," which was noteworthy for St. Mary's since Mary is our patron. The year was ended with a solemn Novena in honor of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The closing service of the Marian Year was the celebration of the first evening mass in St. Mary's.

The parish observed the centennial of the church in 1955. The highlight was the Pontifical High Mass on June 15 which was followed by a banquet.

The church renovation began and services were held in the school gym for three months.

An office-residence was built at Calvary Cemetery to aid the efficient handling of cemetery affairs independently of the parish. Andrew Erne was hired as the caretaker.

The enrollment of pupils in the schools was increasing at such a rate it was deemed necessary to build a grade school building which resulted in a fund drive to help defray the expected cost of construction.

It was built on the corner of Decatur and Madison streets. In November, on the Feast of Christ the King, Bishop Rehring blessed the building. At the same time tuition was initiated for high school students, a band was started and a band booster club evolved to support the organization.

A church census was taken in October, 1957 and that year the St. Vincent de Paul Society was reactivated to look after the poor. The Serra Club, fostering vocations, held a convention in the parish hall. The Local Commandery #49 of the Knights of St. John celebrated its 74th anniversary with Mass, a breakfast and a banquet.

In 1958, three of St. Mary's parishioners were ordained and each said his first Mass at the church before taking his assignment. They were the Rev. Alfred Sartor, the Rev. Sylvan Obergefell and the

Rev. Frank Mouch.

In November, 1963 Father Inkrott became a Domestic Prelate.

In 1964 the slate roof on the church steeple was replaced with copper and a stainless steel cross was placed on top of the steeple.

With the beginning of Advent, the new liturgy was introduced and the people participated by using the new vernacular.

In 1966 Monsignor Inkrott celebrated his 40th anniversary as a priest and he resigned as pastor in August, 1967. Monsignor Albert Sprenger became pastor of St. Mary's and the Dean of the Sandusky Deanery.

Monsignor Sprenger's pastorate was brief indeed. He died in 1971 on a return trip to Sandusky from Toledo. During his administration the facilities at Calvary Cemetery were expanded.

The Rev. Donald E. Mohr was Monsignor Sprenger's successor. He came to Sandusky on Dec. 3, 1971, and three years later he was transferred to St. John the Baptist Parish, Landeck. During his administration a new wing was added to the high school for the science, music and language arts programs.

The Rev. Robert W. Donnelly came to Sandusky Oct. 20, 1974. He established the Immediate Action Drive to relieve the \$400,000 debt he inherited with the pastorate position and in the Spring of 1978 he established the stewardship program to increase the weekly offerings of parishioners.

Enrollment in the elementary and high schools has grown dramatically in recent years and Father Donnelly is responsible for the centralization of the high school. At present a fund drive is being undertaken for funds to improve school facilities.

While physical changes to the church and schools are frequently highlighted in discussions of the changes in St. Mary's Parish, Father Donnelly also sees the need to discuss the changes in the practice of religion which have occurred in the past three decades.

The Christian Family Movement came into force in the diocese in the 1950s and 1960s. The CFM was designed to encourage Catholics to study the scriptures and to look at all facets of life, to observe and criticize according to the scriptures, to judge and to act based on that evaluation.

St. Mary's Parish was one of the first parishes in



the state to establish a Vatican Renewal Education program. Through it the church was called upon to reflect upon itself and to constantly evaluate itself. There emerged a new phase in parish life — a desire for adult education and opportunities to speak to people in the church. "The church spoke where it hadn't spoken before. Our diocese joined the Ohio Council of Churches," said Father Donnelly. "The church's ecumenical involvement was developed during this time. It was an exciting period."

As the church began to see changes, those changes were encouraged by Pope John XXIII. "It is often said he opened the windows of the Vatican and let fresh air in. For parishes it meant an effort to really try to understand the spirit of the council, their people. Each parish tried to meet the needs of the Church and that need extended beyond the church walls," Father Donnelly said.

"We were not used to or conditioned to change. Many of us found it awkward and difficult. God

touches us through the mystery of the Church. We became more articulate about these kinds of things after Vatican II. Before, we never distinguished the teachings and traditions of the Church from the essentials and those that were accidental and cultural. Any change was for substantial and basic things, plus cultural adaptations which did not alter the substance of the Mass.

And yet today we must still realize that Mass has not changed but the manner in which it is celebrated certainly has. The Creed has not changed either but the way we explain it had," said Father Donnelly.

While the changes have been difficult for many, Father Donnelly said the changes have been accepted. Of his parishioners, he said, "Their faith transcends those differences. The people have taken to the change — each for his own reason. The one thing that came out of Vatican II was the open-

ness of the Church. The renewal was difficult for many, but it has been helpful for the whole spectrum of the whole Christian family."

"Women and men have a place in the ministerial and educational life of the church. A pastor merely provides the opportunity — allows things to happen. He must minister to the people, reach out to the people, recognize the giftedness of the people in the parish."

Education has taken on a new face in recent decades. Parents are encouraged to become involved when their children receive the sacraments and children and adults alike have become involved in activities outside the church. While 15 years ago there were no lay people serving in administrative positions in the Catholic schools, today that picture has changed. "There is today a visible integration of religion and life in the schools because of the presence of lay people in our school," Father Donnelly







said

The parish council has also gone through changes in recent years. "In the past many members saw themselves as being responsible for accomplishing things. The members wore two hats. Today, the parish councils are advisory and recommending bodies which exist to critique all aspects of church life and to recommend ways to strengthen it," said Father Donnelly.

In reviewing the changes in the church, Father Donnelly said, "Some people think the oneness of the church has been threatened with the changes. But unity and uniformity are not one in the same any more. Nonconformity can exist while there is unity."

To say the Church in general, and St. Mary's Parish specifically, has changed is an understatement. We have seen the Church in Sandusky grow from an Indian mission in the late 1700s to a modern, enterprising, exciting part of the community in 1980. For St. Mary's the changes have been many and yet we still retain an important part of our past

our heritage

St. Mary's Parish is many things to many people. We all have our own ideals, our own ways of life. But we are also able to bring those beliefs together to join in the celebration of our faith as a Catholic family.

— Steve Kromer, Ann Guendelsberger



# Our Cemeteries

Five acres of land on Mills Street was purchased by the Rev. A. Herbstritt, in 1866, to be used as a burial ground.

The lots were divided eight to a lot and sold for \$10. Lack of interest from the parishioners in the care of the cemetery was visible for many years.

For 25 years, Joe Shelby, John Merkt, Matthis Boder and Eugene Sumser acted as superintendents with deeds cared for by Frank J. Link, followed by John Giedemann.

In 1890, Henry Ringholz became custodian and continued until his death 20 years later. There was no salary connected with the position. The only revenue he and his four predecessors received was that accruing from digging graves.

In the coming years there was a keener interest in the cemetery. Lot owners paid a yearly sum to the church for its care. Collection was difficult to obtain. However, the problem was solved in the 1920s by the Rev. William C. Zierolf, who created the position of custodian, one that included a flat salary and revenues from the caring and digging of graves.

Stephen Ringholz worked at the cemetery for many years. He started in 1855, when only a boy of 13, to assist his father. Fifteen years later, after his father's death, he became superintendent and held the position until 1937.

Lee Zierolf, a well-known St. Mary's parishioner and teacher, became superintendent of St. Mary's Cemetery in 1937. With the assistance of his wife, he continued as superintendent and custodian until 1953. Many may recall their after school detentions, assisting Zierolf at the cemetery. As the science teacher and athletic director at St. Mary's High School from 1932 to 1954, a city commissioner from 1945 to 1951, business manager and associate administrator of Providence Hospital from 1953 to 1973, he was still able to continue as superintendent and custodian until 1953.

More than 5,000 burials have been made in St. Mary's Cemetery. Every lot is sold. The remains of those who built St. Mary's rest there as well as Christ's anointed ones.

The new cemetery, comprising 60 acres and located at Tiffin Avenue and Sanford Street, was purchased in 1927 by Monsignor Zierolf at a price of \$20,000.

Under the guidance of the Rev. Thomas Reynolds, the cemetery was organized and blessed as

'Calvary' in 1929. With the assistance of young men from St. Mary's High School, Father Reynolds began the tedious job of preparing the grounds. One of these young men was Joseph Strickfaden. Assisting Father Reynolds with the landscaping from 1933 to 1937, he developed a keen and diligent interest in landscaping and became one of Sandusky's most prominent nurserymen. He became superintendent of Calvary Cemetery in 1941. All landscaping and designing was done by him. Literally "running the cemetery business from his truck" and maintaining growth in his own business, he continued as superintendent and custodian until 1956.

Strickfaden developed one of the most beautiful



cemeteries in the area. Calvary became the first cemetery in the area to have restrictions for easier maintenance. He encouraged the installation of bronze markers instead of using the traditional monuments and placed restrictions on floral decorations. Notwithstanding opposition, Calvary became a beautiful and easily maintained burial ground.

Strickfaden was the last of many superintendents and custodians to so freely donate years of continuing labor, time and interest. It is mainly through the efforts of these people that our cemeteries today are fit and beautiful places to contain the remains of our dear departed ones.

In 1956, it was decided that the position of superintendent of St. Mary's and Calvary Cemeteries should become a salaried position. A home was built on Sanford Street for the superintendent and his family, including offices, storage buildings and equipment.

At that time, Andrew Erne was hired for the position and continued until 1979. He was followed by Joseph Singler, our present superintendent. Singler has two full time employees, with high school students employed during the summer months.

July 1, 1979, St. Mary's and Calvary cemeteries consolidated with St. Joseph's Cemetery, located on Mills Street, and formally cared for by Sts. Peter and Paul and Holy Angels parishes. The superintendent is in charge of all three cemeteries, officially named "Catholic Cemeteries of Sandusky, Ohio," with regulations basically the same for all three.

Available burial area at St. Joseph's Cemetery includes approximately 2,000 spaces. As of April 1980, 3,266 burials have taken place in Calvary Cemetery, with numerous, already developed lots estimated to last the next 15 years still available. Most remaining burial spaces are priced equally at \$180. Circle spaces are priced higher, and infant graves are somewhat less. The fee includes perpetual care. Individual bronze markers can be purchased and installed for approximately \$251. New companion markers are also being used as joint markers for husband and wife. A portion of the lot income is invested to allow for perpetual care.

The Catholic Cemeteries of Sandusky Advisory Board to the pastors of Holy Angels, Sts. Peter and Paul and St. Mary's parishes has been formed. The board is comprised of parishioner representatives







from the three Sandusky parishes

The original 60 acres purchased for Calvary Cemetery more than 50 years ago have seen many changes. In 1938 approximately 37 acres of cemetery land was leased to the City of Sandusky. A municipal golf course has been established using that portion of the land as well as city property. It was leased for \$100 per year for 40 years. In June, 1979, a new lease, escalating from \$2,500 to \$6,500 over a five year period, was established.

The initial purchase of this property for \$20,000 in 1927, has become a self-supporting endeavor over the years. The leasing of property to the City of Sandusky provides for future needs of burial space. A small portion of the land was sold at a profit to the State of Ohio for the Sanford Street right-of-way. The remaining 37.9378 acres has been appraised at

more than \$300,000.

The years have presented other dramatic changes in our burial practices. The evidence of the mainly German ancestry of St. Mary's Church can be found in St. Mary's Cemetery, while the primarily Italian ancestry of Sts. Peter and Paul and Holy Angels churches is found in St. Joseph's Cemetery, located directly opposite on Mills Street.

Mixed marriage sections are no longer used as such.

Cremation has become an accepted burial arrangement.

All remaining burial spaces are available with perpetual care to members of all three parishes.

Through the efforts of many dedicated and loyal predecessors, our Catholic cemeteries today reflect their many achievements.





Peace and comfort is acquired in knowing a suitable resting place is available to all of our belief

— Sue Galloway



**Furthering  
Our  
Faith**

## *Elementary Education*

It is remarkable how urgently our parish forefathers felt the need for a Catholic Christian education. In 1857, just four short years after formation of the parish, a two story frame boys' school of four rooms was constructed on Jefferson Street. But already ERA was at work on the fledgling church and by 1961 a two story stone girls' school of four rooms was started on Decatur Street, under the direction of the Rev. John Harkspiel.

The Rev. Nicholas Moes enlarged and completed the school in 1862 at the astonishing cost of \$5,000. (Could you buy a lot for \$5,000 today?)

By 1880 parish membership had grown to 400 families and school enrollment increased to 600 students. Talk about population explosion, how does that compare to our present membership of 2,700 families and school enrollment of 594?

From the very beginning, the Sisters of the Sacred Heart served St. Mary's School. In 1893 they were withdrawn and that same autumn the Sisters

of Notre Dame came to teach at St. Mary's.

A boiler house, two classrooms and two lavatories were built in 1908 by the Rev. Joseph S. Widmann for \$5,095. The girls' school was converted to the sisters' house for an additional \$6,000.

In 1909 the present high school building with its third floor currently occupied by the elementary grades was completed at a cost of \$113,400. Originally, it was built as a grade school with 15 classrooms and an auditorium.

The classrooms were said to have excellent lighting, blackboards and wardrobes — (they're still there!). The building was to serve 48 pupils per classroom, and the auditorium seated 900 people. It was fireproof and housed the principal's office, two meeting rooms in the basement, kitchen, shower room, and a large social hall.

In 1922, the two classrooms in the boiler house were converted to a chemistry room and a physics room to accommodate the newly formed high







school. Two additional grade school rooms were added over these boiler house rooms in 1927

Due to the lack of space in 1952, half day sessions were put into effect for parts of the first and fourth grades. By 1957, 12 new classrooms were built on Decatur and Madison streets, costing \$350,000 Bishop George Rehring dedicated the building on the Feast of Christ the King

To offset some of the rising costs of education, elementary school tuition was started in 1970. Gone were the days when your only costs were in the annual book bills

In 1972 the first elementary board of education was appointed Uniforms, the lament of every would-be glamour girl, were adopted for the elementary girls in 1974

By 1978, two government funded mobile classrooms were put into use Remedial reading, speech and hearing can be provided for six pupils an hour every hour of the school day





Looking back, do you remember, as we do

When the pupil per teacher ratio was not 30, as we know it today, but was 50 — and the classroom was quiet as a tomb?

When two or three lay teachers was considered by parishioners as two or three too many?

When everyone went home for lunch and came back to recess on a cinder playground?

When there were no snow days, so we often returned to the classroom with soaking wet "long Johns"?

When "my wheels" meant a bicycle?

When we went to daily Mass, but receiving Communion was something special, partly because we stopped at Schweinfurth's Bakery for rolls and Stamm's Saloon for milk?

When colored chalk and black and white pictures

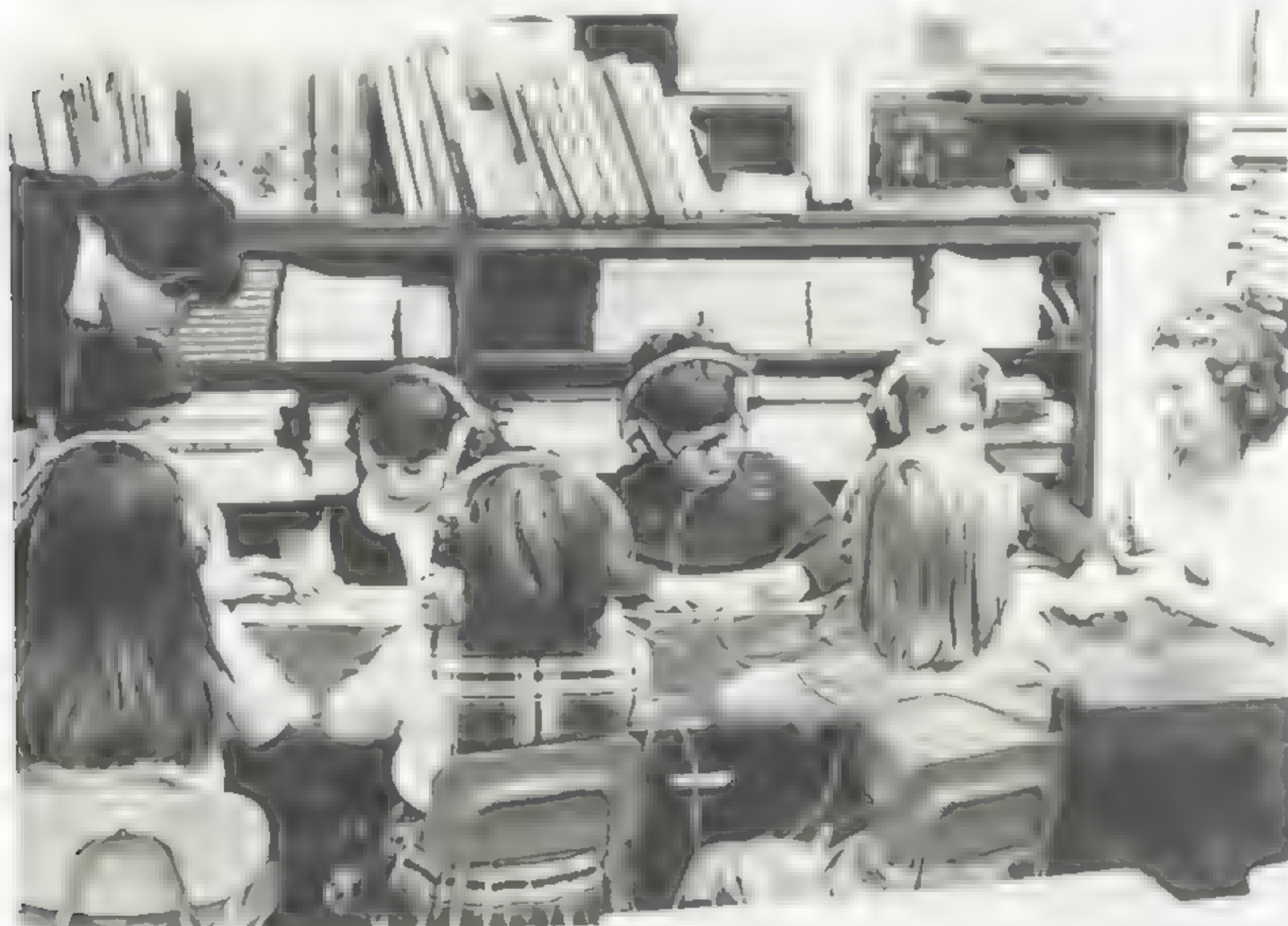
in textbooks were a treat?

When Monsignor Ziefolf gave out report cards and as Santa Clause at the Christmas programs, handed out jumbo sticks of peppermint?

When the upper grades had really "made it," because at recess, they occupied the playground where the live fowl for the festival were penned?

We've come a long way!

— Rita Braeunig and Colet Foley



## High School Education

They arrived with little more than their dreams, the German immigrants who founded St. Mary's parish. No one among us today can remember the beginnings or the struggles of our ancestors, yet, they enriched our past, inspire us today, and challenge us to provide for future generations. While they worked hard to meet their needs, they eyed the future and established an institution to give guidance to the generations to come. We know this institution as the people and the buildings that make up St. Mary's School.

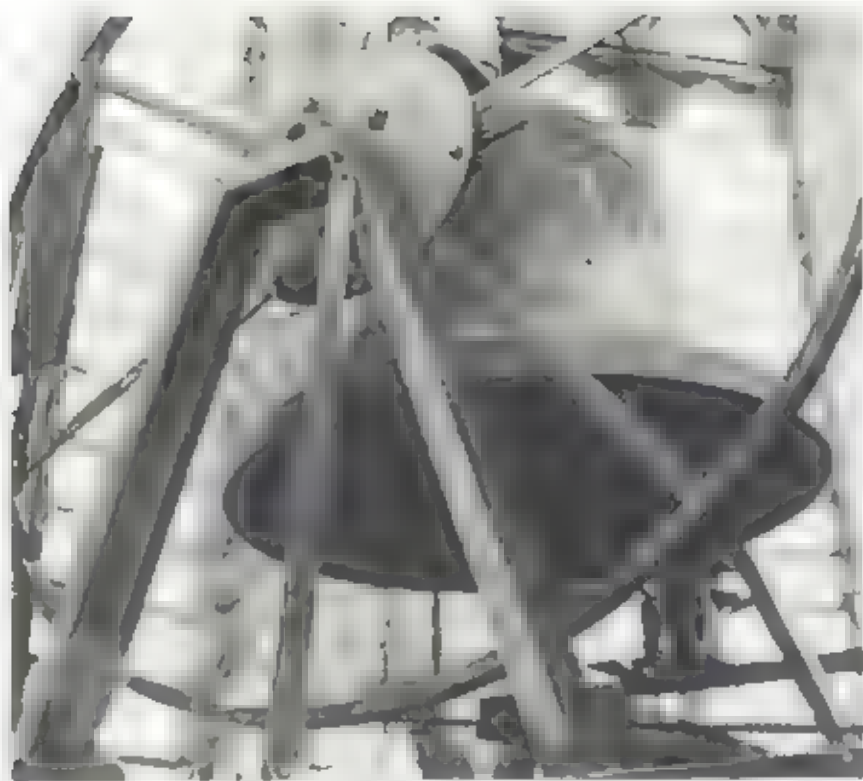
The history of the parish schools in the United States is rooted in the first Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1852. The participants of that gathering commanded Bishops to establish schools in each parish of their diocese. These schools would serve to insure instruction in the faith, safeguard our youth against moral decay, and in many cases helped to retain the customs and native language of the parish community.

The people of St. Mary's under the direction of the Rev. James Harmene, met this edict of 1857.

Two short years after the people built their first church, a school was erected. It was a frame building that faced Jefferson Street and sat in the same location as the present high school. Instruction and all textbooks in its four classrooms were in German. Four years later in 1861, the Rev. John Harkspiel began construction of a second school building. This stone structure completed in 1862 at a cost of \$5,000, faced Decatur Street. It too contained four classrooms and was used to educate the young ladies of the parish. The young men were instructed in the old school.

As more families arrived in Sandusky and established themselves in the parish, the school enrollment continued to grow. By 1880, four hundred children were registered. By 1890, that number climbed to 600 pupils receiving instruction. With these numbers and only eight classrooms, severe overcrowding resulted. In 1894, the problem was alleviated somewhat when old St. Mary's Church was converted into two classrooms by the pastor, the Rev. S. Rebholz. Conditions continued without





change until 1908. Six years earlier the Rev. Joseph Widmann came to St. Mary's. He had a great interest in the education of St. Mary's children. In addition to making important curriculum changes, he proved to be a master builder.

His first step was to add the boiler house complex with its two classrooms and lavatories to the rear of the girls' school, in 1908. One year later the old church and boys' school were razed and construction began on a new school.

The magnificent building that rose on the corner contained 15 spacious classrooms, a library, and offices. A 900-seat auditorium occupied the center of the second and third floors. The basement contained meeting rooms, a kitchen and social hall. At the same time the girls' school was remodeled as a convent for the Sisters of Notre Dame. The entire cost of the project was \$113,400.

Father Widmann died in December, 1918. He was succeeded several weeks later by the Rev. (later Monsignor) William Zierolf. Early in Father Zierolf's pastorate the families of St. Mary's paid off the debt remaining from the building of the school. In addition he added a wing to the convent and two additional classrooms above the boiler room in 1927.

Overcrowding continued to be a problem for the school. During the 1930s and 1940s classes were held in the meeting rooms above the church's boiler

house, (which since has been dismantled). In the mid 1950s, under the direction of the Rev. Joseph Inkrott, extensive renovation took place. The auditorium was converted into classrooms. A new gymnasium-auditorium wing was added to the school.

Feeling the effects of the baby boom, the elementary school was forced into half-day sessions for some classes about this time. This problem was alleviated in 1957 by the construction of a \$350,000 12-classroom addition on Decatur Street. The main school building was also renovated at this time. Recent additions to the school complex include a four-room science building erected in 1972 and two government sponsored mobile classrooms for the elementary school use in 1978.

The amount of attention given to our parish school buildings is in vain if the process that goes on inside those walls is not interesting, challenging, relevant and useful to the children.

When St. Mary's School opened its doors in 1857, the children spoke German in class and all of their textbooks were printed in this familiar language. The greeting, "Glaub sie Jeus Christi" (praised be Jesus Christ) was used by the students well into this century. It was not until World War I that speaking German fell into disuse. Many of the remaining German texts were destroyed at "book burnings" in the parks as a show of patriotism in those troubled times.

Early on, children were educated only up to the sixth grade and later the eighth. It wasn't until 1902, that steps were taken to provide for post-elementary education. That year a commercial course was offered to the eighth grade graduates. The course provided vocational skills necessary for the young people to assume positions in the business community. The two-year curriculum included classes in shorthand, typing, bookkeeping, secretarial training and related subjects. The latest business machinery was used to compliment the classes.

In 1919, Father Zierolf and the people of the parish, realizing the need for post-grammar school training, set about to organize a high school program. Beginning in the fall of 1920, freshman and sophomore classwork in the classic and scientific areas was introduced. The commercial course was also incorporated into the four-year program. In 1923, the year of the first graduating class, St. Mary's High School received a charter from the





Ohio Department of Education. As high school programs grew in popularity through the 1920s and the needs of the students changed, additions to the curriculum were made. These included programs in home arts, drafting and shop.

A dedicated faculty has long contributed to the success of St. Mary's Schools.

The Daughters of the Sacred Heart of Mary, locally known as the Ladies of the Sacred Heart made up the first school staff. They arrived here in 1857, and served for 35 years. They were called back to Buffalo, N.Y., by their superior in 1893, because there was a shortage of sisters.

That year Father Rebholz invited the Sisters of Notre Dame to staff the school. They arrived that fall and for the past 87 years, have been active in elementary and high school instruction and parish life.

The position of the principal of the grade school has always been filled by one of the sisters. This practice continued for the high school from the time of its establishment until 1925. That year the Rev. J. Bernard Fralick was appointed principal of St. Mary's High School. He was succeeded by the Rev. Thomas Reynolds, who worked to solidify the high school program until 1943, when he left St. Mary's High to join the armed forces.

The Rev. Joseph Hartmann directed the school through the war years and on into the 1950s. The following individuals have most recently served as principals of St. Mary's High School: 1954, the Rev. Raymond Etzel; 1961, the Rev. John Lester; 1962, the Rev. Frank Niest; 1967, the Rev. Robert Yeager; 1968, Sr. Mary Johnene, SND; 1969, the Rev. Robert Yeager; 1973, Randy Harris, and 1975, Dennis Rectenwald.

The faculty of St. Mary's has long been blessed with many fine lay teachers. Two of these who have given much to the high school are Lillian Fievet and Evelyn Bing. Miss Fievet was the first four-year graduate of St. Mary's High. She returned in the fall of 1923 and taught at both the elementary and secondary levels for 46 years.

Miss Bing graduated in 1924 and returned one year later to teach and later served as the high school secretary until her retirement in 1973.

Early in the history of the school, the children took part in many church celebrations. They processed for First Communions, Confirmations and together attended Mass frequently. While these practices continued, new activities were added with the establishment of the high school.

Perhaps the oldest high school activity turned cherished tradition, is *The Bell*. Begun in 1924 as a monthly high school newspaper, *The Bell* has provided generations of St. Mary's students and grads with the latest school happenings. Today the high school yearbook proudly bears the name *The Bell*.

School plays, programs to celebrate the holidays and honor priests on their birthdays and name days, also involved and utilized the talents of St. Mary's students. On the playing field the reputation of St. Mary's Panthers has long brought honor to the community.

The first football squad was organized in 1922. The "Boosters" were soon formed to support and encourage the athletics program.

Herbert Eisele came to St. Mary's as the first coach and athletic director. He succeeded in developing fine football and basketball programs. He was followed by Coach Ray Helmer in 1928. Lee Zierolf came to St. Mary's in 1932 and he and his basketball team brought home St. Mary's first State Championship in 1936. That feat was repeated again in 1980 when the cagers, under the direction of Coach Wally Amburn, himself a St. Mary's graduate, brought home the honors.

In 1974, the focus of St. Mary's shifted from a one parish high school to a centralized community facility. Three parishes, Sts. Peter and Paul, Holy Angels, and St. Peter's Huron, have joined forces with St. Mary's Parish in a commitment to provide a secondary education for youth in a Christian atmosphere. The centralization also is designed to financially support the facility. With a steady high school

enrollment of just over 500 pupils, St. Mary's continues to provide leaders for our community.

Course offerings in religion, coupled with class retreats and school liturgies help students develop their spirituality and maintain a Christian perspective. Course offerings in the sciences, mathematics, humanities and arts prepare students for post-secondary education or the world of work. A wide range of extracurricular activities along with a fine athletic program provide opportunities for social development.





A dedicated faculty of 34 religious and lay teachers labor to meet the instructional needs and provide guidance for the students of St. Mary's Central Catholic High School.

For 123 years, education of her youth has been a prime concern of the people of St. Mary's Church. Are we meeting the challenge left us by the founding fathers of our community? To answer that question one need only look at one of several billboards around town proclaiming "St. Mary's Central Catholic High School — a community school seeking community support."

Support is being sought to finance expansion and renovation of St. Mary's Central Catholic High School. Plans include erection of a classroom annex, multipurpose room with gym and physical education facilities, and renovation of the library-media centers. Future plans include renovation of the existing building and demolition of the boiler room wing. It will be replaced by a building that will house art rooms, industrial art classrooms and a theatre.



Proof that the commitment to provide for the education of generations to come is still a foremost concern of the St. Mary's community

The names of those people who have dedicated themselves to the development of St. Mary's High School reads like a litany — they were our leaders, our builders and our teachers. What memories they have given us! And so it goes on through the years — history repeats itself, and you can look around today, and see the faces of the people who will provide memories for generations to follow

— Dennis Rectenwald, Monty Sayers



# Religious Education

We stand today, no longer an immigrant people charged with the responsibility of beginnings in religious education, but an established people, concerned with the challenge of education as a lifelong process. We see that Christian education is a challenge that will keep each of us working and learning for the rest of our lives. Realizing this, we are about the work of providing many opportunities for learning experiences that are integral to growth throughout our Christian lives.

Among those opportunities are the earlier efforts of the Christian Family Movement, known as CFM, which provided for family education and activities in the 1960s, and the Vatican II Religious Education Conference, or VREC, which was formed in the late 1960s to prepare and educate people to the changes in the Church, subsequent to Vatican II. The Rev. James Bacik, a former associate pastor here at St. Mary's, was quite involved in both of these organizations.

Present-day endeavors include a host of classes and courses, among other things. And it is worthwhile to note here, that in all of the following areas, lay people are much more involved as teachers, directors and discussion leaders, which is an opportunity for education in itself. A brief summary of the happenings in religious education in our parish follows.

In the areas of *Sacramental Preparation* programs include: instruction and preparation for Bap-

tism in the home where parents are visited by one of our parish priests; parents of children receiving First Communion, Penance, or Confirmation are invited and encouraged to attend parent instruction sessions to enable them to be partners with the teacher in preparing their children for the sacrament to be received, and couples planning to marry attend a day long session that is directed at helping them realize the fullness of a true Christian marriage working to understand themselves, each other, and God in deeper ways.

Designed for children from ages three to five, our *Pre-School Religion Classes* are aimed at helping the children discover God's world around them through projects, stories, songs and prayers. St. Mary's pre-school program was formulated through ideas from the Christian Family Movement, workshops in the diocese, and the cooperation of many Protestant churches in the area. Enthusiastic women of our parish organize and staff this program.

*Elementary and High School CCD Classes* are held throughout the school year for the purpose of providing our public school parishioners with an inspirational, educational and social connection to the Catholic Church and the Christian way of life. Clergy, religious and laity combine their efforts in the teaching of these classes.

*Special Education Classes* are now offered for our mentally and physically handicapped parishioners. Religious instruction and various activities are included in the Saturday morning sessions held during the school year.

*Spiritual Renewal Programs* are continually being offered to our adult parishioners. Included among these opportunities are Inquiry classes — for people who want to learn more about Catholicism — Scripture courses, and our Lenten Series which are offered annually to provide education and discussion on current religious topics. The Genesis II Program and Christ Renews His Parish retreats are also good opportunities for spiritual renewal. Genesis II is designed for small groups of people to gather and listen to recordings, view video-tapes and discuss matters of faith.

One of our parishioners had this to say about Genesis II: "In general, it's one of the most self-revealing experiences I have had. It helps me to realize how easy it is to get close to God. I am very impressed with the way it helps me find God in







people and everyday life. It's through people that we learn of God's loving care for each of us. Each week I find a different experience which relates to everyday living. I look forward to going every week."

A Christ Renews His Parish retreat is a chance for parishioners to come together for a weekend at St. Mary's to share experiences of loving God and neighbor. These weekends are a pleasant combination of parishioners — listening, talking, laughing, eating, singing and praising, all for the purpose of aiding personal spiritual renewal, as well as strengthening our parish family. Commenting on this experience a parishioner said, "It's a tremendous experience! I think the benefits extend far beyond the weekend. There is a feeling of harmony — the harmony of living with God experienced through living with His people."

Where do we go from here?

We look back with pride on the achievements of our forefathers as they built the beginnings of religious education for St. Mary's. We are inspired by their hard work and perseverance. At this stage in

our history, we are grateful for the example of those immigrant people, and we pledge ourselves to the treasured tradition of making Christian education a primary concern throughout the lives of the people of St. Mary's parish

— Carol Collins

# We Talk About Ourselves

Our intent in interviewing persons who were or are a part of St. Mary's Parish was to define the personality of the parish, focus on its place in the lives of several of its members and, in effect through those interviews, make a statement of fact about the parish, its members and its purpose in the community.

Eloise and Dean Renwand selected the persons who were interviewed and spent time with each discussing the past and looking into the present and future. What follows are the interviews which were conducted this spring.



# *The Rev. James Bacik*

The Rev. James Bacik is an associate at St Thomas Moore Parish at Bowling Green, Ohio and formerly was associated with Sandusky St. Mary's DEAN: You came to Sandusky St. Mary's when, Father?

FATHER BACIK: I was there from 1962 to 1967. I must say I still carry fond memories of those days. Somehow they seem very special to me. It was certainly an exciting time to be around. It was the time when the Second Vatican Council started, and I think a lot of what went on in those days was connected with that.

When I came in 1962 I knew that things were going to begin to change in the church. I had the sense of that. I knew we were in for great changes and I think that I saw a lot of my work there in terms of preparing people for those changes. I remember giving as many talks, lectures, classes and discussions on changes in the church. That seemed like that was the major topic and I was always trying to show people the reasons why that would have to be . . . to prepare people so they wouldn't be too nervous about the changes when they actually did occur.

I think that somehow I lived through it with a lot of people there, that whole council experience. The council, of course, ended in 1965. We saw the results of the changes and I felt that that was one of the reasons that there was such a close bond with so many people — because I lived through those changes with them. I think I functioned as a guide or a helper for a lot of people in those days. Lots of that was connected with the CFM movement, I know. It was already established before I was there and I was so fortunate to get involved that I often say that that was one of the great learning experiences in my life. You went to meetings and you had to keep your mouth shut. I couldn't talk, so if I couldn't talk, I might as well listen and because I listened, I think I learned a lot. I think I couldn't have had a better start in the ministry than that kind of experience. I feel I learned so much about the people of Sandusky and St. Mary's particularly, mostly because there were so many occasions I was forced to listen. I found a great wisdom in the people and I ended up finding my own life enriched. So many directions we took were dictated by the people and I took my cues and lead from them. I think many people developed a positive attitude towards them, that otherwise wouldn't have happened. I think that we were very fortunate that way. I think that some people without that kind of

preparation would have hated the changes and would not have gone along with them. I think we were able to move forward that way. That early education was very important to me all the time. I was involved in the founding of Vatican II Religious Center, the first classes taught at the K of C Hall. I still remember those. I still remember the first one on the Old Testament and people to this day will still come up to me and say "Remember that course?". How important it was to them. By our standards today, it wasn't all that great, that's for sure, and I could have done a much better job. In those days somehow it alerted many people to understand the pluralism of the church, the changing character of the church, because we saw how things develop through the Old Testament. So those courses at the Vatican II Religious Center were one of the better things we did.

That whole program, after I left, took on different character and so it was great. I never thought of what I was doing at St. Mary's as a building that would stay the same. I felt that the best way to help build something in a parish was to see that people would carry it on themselves. I never thought of myself as being the center point of it or it being totally related to me, but that what we were doing was trying to train leaders and get people involved and have the whole community take responsibility for its learning. Then it would go in different directions, depending on the need of the people and new situations people face. I felt very good that in general, interest in education continued. There are still people in Sandusky now who come regularly to classes I have here in Bowling Green and people who drive from Sandusky for the reflection classes I have and for various things, you know.

DEAN: Do you still see it as an integral part of the parish — to have these educational classes or adult education classes?

FR. BACIK: Well, every parish has to be a learning community and that's one part of what a parish does. It does other things, like it worships together, which is very important. It also serves. It has to reach out to other people. One part, however, is learning and the learning has to take through the whole community, now and then the opportunities of all levels. We have to take care of preschool children, grade school children and high school. They have to have opportunities to deal with the collegians and people who are functioning as adults, either single people or married people. People have different needs at different times.

and we have to be ready to meet them. We can't concentrate on just one phase.

Now one of the things I did at that time was I taught in the grade school for a while when I was there. I would go into the classes and teach religion for an hour. I can still remember being in fourth grade teaching religion to the fourth graders and I still use some of that as an example in talks I give yet today. I still remember some of the kids in the class and have a vivid picture of one girl just standing up in the middle of class and adjusting her skirt and sitting down again. They are still uninhibited at this time. Just beautiful memories of those children so that the whole business of teaching religion in the grade school was involved then. I think I understood, as a result, the importance of creating a warm climate or trying to get the kids to laugh or be alive in various ways.

Then I taught in the high school for a while. I used to teach religion classes and got very close to many of the high school students and as people know, Sandusky is very involved in the athletic side of it. I love sports. I used to play basketball with the guys in the gym and so on, and was very close to a lot of those good athletes. Some of those I still see and some consult and talk with me, which I really like. I think of some of the great stars we had in those days, the tremendous time for athletics. Great records and, of course, it has been topped recently by the undefeated season and state championship. But we came mighty close in some of those other years, only losing one or two games.

I used to go to the gym and play with those guys and work out with them and loved that side of it. I suppose I established a lot of rapport with the young people as a result of my involvement with the athletics. It was all part of creating a good climate in the school and teaching religion that fit into that then. Now, if you were believable to the kids or related to them on the playground or in the gym with them, or went to parties with them, and got to be trusted, then what you said in the classroom carried a little more weight. I saw a big part of my job to relate to people in the school, to create a Christian atmosphere.

DEAN: Is there any outstanding thing that comes to mind . . . ?

FR. BACIK: The picture of the parish being a learning community. I was always interested in that and I think a lot of progress was made in that. I felt proud of a lot of things that happened with



Vatican II Center and the education of the adults. The spreading of the CFM movement. I think that liturgically, it was important.

I felt that my job there as leader of liturgy was very important and I put a lot of time on it and I felt that preaching of the sermons was important. I appreciated the response of people to those and still people will give me feedback on those. I often use a story of one of the times I was first at St. Mary's. I was standing in the back of the church after Mass and some guy came up. I still know who it was and came out and said to me, "You know I came here expecting to hear something and I listened and listened and listened and you never said anything." I never forgot that and I bring that up a lot of times and use it some weeks when I don't feel like preparing a sermon too hard. I remember that and remember there might be people out there that came here to hear something and I'd better be ready to tell them.

The honesty of the parishoners was very impor-



tant to me. There were many strong people and good leaders who I think taught me about what the priesthood was really about. When I came out of the seminary in '62, I was ill-prepared for the ministry. I often said if they were looking for a seminary system that would prepare you poorly for the priesthood, they figured it out and it couldn't have been much worse, in my opinion.

But, I was so lucky to be sent to St. Mary's Sandusky, because there there was a lot of vigorous people and strong people who would speak their mind, and people were not afraid to say how they saw things. I feel I learned so much in those days, the early years there, so much about what it meant to be a priest and how you are supposed to serve the people, try to create harmony among the people and need to respond to the real situations of the people. I learned all of that and stuff that I have carried with me in the ministry ever since.

So I can't say enough about those days, I have fond memories. When I drive out of town (Sandusky) I feel energized. I feel strengthened in some way, there is a part of me that is in Sandusky and part of my roots are there and I find strength in people who are there. When I come there that happens to me — a very strange feeling.

DEAN: I think it works two ways. People feel like the same thing when you are there.

FR. BACIK: I know. It's a special bond, I really think that. I don't find many priests who really feel that same way about their place. I attribute that to the fact that I think I served the people in a special way at the time because of Vatican II and because of the changes. I link it to the fact that we went through something significant together that influenced people's lives. That is being able to adapt to a new church, new ways, etc.

DEAN: Having experience those changes with the people here in St. Mary's what would you advise on what they should be looking toward in keeping St. Mary's — the religious part of it?

FR. BACIK: Situations change. What you got to do is keep honestly assessing the new situation. There are no forms that are final. There is no way of doing these things. Ways, methods, techniques have to be adapted to the time and people have to be willing and ready to keep making changes. We are going to see more changes in the church in the years ahead; we're not really going to put the lid on things at all and, therefore, we have to keep adapting.

You can only deal with the situation by being

on the scene. What you need is the continuing interaction between the priests there and all the members of the parish and you have to experiment with different programs and see if that might not be the vehicle of the day. Maybe it's Christ Renews His Parish or maybe it's some other new vehicle, but that will pass too and there will be some other way.

What's constant is the continued effort for the clergy and the people to interact and with the clergy seen as leaders, but not one to lord it over, but one to serve. I feel that a lot of my creditability at St. Mary's developed from the fact that I helped people, that when I counseled people, when I was there when people were sick in the hospital, when I was with people in the grieving time of the funerals, when I was there at the festivals and shared the good times and all that, I believe that is what develops credibility and it's a matter of that's what is still needed. The clergy has to do that and the people then have to respond. I found a tremendous lot of good will that way. You can't settle for any one form, there is no one panacea or fine lance or total thing at all for us Christians.

DEAN: It certainly isn't a time for us to sit back and say well we've accomplished a lot of things here.

FR. BACIK: Right, there's a proper time to celebrate what went before, but it's only as a spring board to the future. Only a spring board for continued growth. You can't get tied to any one way of doing things. You have to always be ready to look and see where the spirit moves us. We're in the business of spreading Christianity, of making the community real, that's what it's about.

We're trying to find the way the gospel is real for us, how to heal people's wounds, how to help people grow, how to help people have good marriages and raise their children right, how to die with dignity and properly, and to meet their responsibilities and to find meaning in their work. That's where life is lived. The parish has meaning in trying to help people do that. So that's why you come to worship, to get your batteries charged, so you can go out and be a better father or mother, a better worker and a better member of the community and that's why you learn the faith — so it's clear to you, so you can spread it or tell people about it or live it out and that's why the community has to look outside itself.

A community that is just turned in on itself, just thinks about its ownself, it's no good, it gets stagnant. That's one of the great things about the

CFM too, that we had in those days. You had to have an action, you had to work outside the group and see what the needs of the community were. A lot of things I learned about Sandusky through the CFM because of the civic involvement and the ghetto problems and the problems of the blacks, the poor, and those have to be there. Any community that wants to just turn in on itself and just congratulate itself or feel good or put all of its money into building up its own thing will destroy itself.

Christianity is all about spreading the gospel and reaching out and someday we will all be judged on Matthew XXV, that is I was hungry, thirsty, homeless and you either helped me or you didn't. The parish community has to be growing and reaching out and learning and worshipping properly, with always the new and better form. I feel very positive about my days there. You know I said some things about serving and educating.

I certainly don't look back on it as a perfect time, there are a lot of mistakes I made and a lot of things I wish I could change.

Now and then I think back about individual people who I didn't counsel correctly or who I should have been more lenient with or more tolerant with and think to myself, Boy I was unenlightened, or I was too young or I didn't have enough experience, or I didn't know enough then yet, and I look back on those and say hey, I didn't do too well. I think that then I have to be very trusting in God and say well where I didn't do it God, it's His work anyway and you can't get a messiah complex about it or think it's all in your own hands.

Still they were fun days, good times. We had a few beers together and a few laughs and played some sports together and bowled together and it was a great time for ecumenical relationships. I just saw Pastor Stelthorn recently and I still remember an incident in Memorial Hospital. I was standing there and he came up to me and said hello, shook hands with me and we had a good conversation and some people said they almost fell over. They thought they would never see that day and we started the ecumenical dialogue and I was over to his church and he showed me around it and we used to meet regularly and make plans together and became members of the ministerial association and again there we inaugurated a new age and he was good to me and he still remembers that and his wife still remembers. He came to my farewell I know, and I ran into them recently at a concert in Toledo and

we were recalling those times with a lot of fondness. Those were breakthroughs because many people said they never thought they would see that. I just was talking about him tonight in a class without even thinking about it — some of the things I learned from him about preaching and so on. So the ecumenical movement at that time was very important. Big breakthroughs there.

DEAN: Father, you played such an important part and as you pointed out that was really a growing era.

FR. BACIK: It was an exciting time. Everything seemed good and bright, and we had a good future. I still remember the first Sunday in preaching when we changed the liturgy. I think I used that quote, "The journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step." I still remember that and that we had to start and make changes, change to English. Those were exciting times. Super exciting times, and a lot of growing and developing, so I think I will always have fond memories of that.



# *Lucille and Art Moosburger*

ELOISE: Do you want to tell me how old you are?

LUCILLE: Yes, I am 72 years old

ART: I'll be 74 in August

ELOISE: We would like to know how you feel about St. Mary's. Has it been an important part of your life?

ART: My grandfather was a blacksmith and he helped in the building of the church

ELOISE: When was that?

ART: That would have been in 1880 and my mother was baptized that same year.

ELOISE: Did your family come here from Germany? Your grandparents? Why did they come to Sandusky? Did they have a reason to come here?

ART: At that time there was a trend and there were a few German settlers here and they wrote to their family back in Germany. I guess they didn't like the Kaiser or something, so they wanted to get away from the military training and this was the land of opportunity.

ELOISE: Did they pick Sandusky because they knew people here?

ART: Because some previous relatives were here So it has been a part of our life

ELOISE: Were your grandparents married when they came over?

ART: I can't say for sure about that

ELOISE: Do you remember what part of Germany they came from?

ART: They talk about Baden

LUCILLE: My grandparents came from Baden, too My mother and father were married in St. Mary's.

ELOISE: Were they? What was your maiden name?

LUCILLE: Holtz

ELOISE: Do you have any family back in Germany anymore?

ART: Not that we know of or have any contact with

ELOISE: Did your family ever tell you any stories about early St. Mary's or the things they had to do?

LUCILLE: Yes. We were babies and they took us up there when they laid the corner stone. That was 1908, wasn't it?

ART: That was the school corner stone. That was the same year you were born. You were a few months old

LUCILLE: We belonged to Holy Angels. We belonged out there until the eighth grade. They built a store out there

ELOISE: You came to the high school?

LUCILLE: Eighth grade we started

ART: All the way through — 1913 to 1925

ELOISE: Things were different then in your school?

ART: I was thinking of some things before. It was a German parish, and we used to say German prayers before class and Father Widmann used to come in. It was a religious German atmosphere Of course in 1914 and the next few years the war was on and they dropped German. Anything connected with the Kaiser, that was a dirty word

ELOISE: They dropped it because they didn't have a need for the German language anymore?

LUCILLE: They teach it now, don't they?

ELOISE: Yes, now they have German, Spanish, and if they have a teacher that can teach French, they teach that

ART: There was so much patriotism, that people were down on Germany and they thought if you talked German you were one of them, an enemy

ELOISE: What was the school like when you went over there? Was it over there where the high school is now?

ART: The present building before all these additions were added to it

ELOISE: Did you have the girls and boys together in your classes?

ART: Yes, at that time everything was joined together but it seemed like the first floor was all the high school. Of course, they really did start with a full high school until about 1920. The first full four year class was in 1924. I think. My class was 1925. We started the "Bell" in our class. We started in the fall of 1924

ELOISE: When did you put that out?

ART: Monthly then, then we had a yearbook too. Of course, then a few years later, I guess they dropped the monthly issues and just put out the yearbook

ELOISE: How did they decide on the name of "Bell", do you remember?

ART: Well, they took a vote, people put in suggestions and we picked out a few names and submitted them for Father Zierolf and he thought the Bell was significant with the church, too.

LUCILLE: I think that it was sort of a nice name, don't you think?

ELOISE: Yes, I do. How did it get started? Did you work on it?

ART: I was the first editor of the yearbook. Louie Harb and I were co-editors and then his mother passed away during the year and he lost interest or just couldn't take care of it so I finished up as an editor

ELOISE: How many were in your class; do you remember when you were there in high school?

ART: We had 19 in our class





ELOISE: What did you study when you were in high school? All the things they do now?

ART: Yes, either a commercial course or else scientific course

ELOISE: And that was enough to get you a job when you got out of high school?

ART: Yes, you could get enough credits for college too

ELOISE: Did many people go to college then?

ART: No, we

LUCILLE: We only had one in our class and that was Mark Kellerman. 1929 was the crash and I was graduated in 1926 and I guess that times were kind of bad at that time too, you know

ART: People thought if you had a high school education that was enough

ELOISE: Do you feel you got a good training there at St. Mary's?

ART: Yes we thought we were pretty qualified

ELOISE: When you compared yourselves to the kids from the public schools, did you feel

ART: We never felt inferior. In those days it seemed like employers preferred Catholic students

LUCILLE: I know, I heard that different times. When I worked down at Manhattan they always wanted me to try to get somebody from St. Mary's. They used to call up to see if anyone would be available. They always favored the Catholics

ELOISE: Did you have the nuns then too?

ART: Yes, there were very few lay teachers. I don't



know if we had any

LUCILLE: I don't think we had anybody teaching when we started. We had all nuns in our class

ELOISE: How did you get started working over at the parish, Lucille? Was it just handy or a rough year?

LUCILLE: Father Inkrott asked me at Altar Society meeting. I was treasurer of Altar Society

ART: Father Dobmeyer kinda put him next to you

LUCILLE: I guess he put a bug in Father's ear. He introduced himself, he was new here, and that was in October. I went the next day to have an interview with him. I said my boy, Charlie, would be going to school then, so I was available. I started off on probation. I didn't get paid for two months. I wasn't on the payroll

ELOISE: He was just checking you out

LUCILLE: He was just checking me out to see how things were. I was there for 25 years

ELOISE: You were a jack of all trades

LUCILLE: I was in the office then

ART: You retired for two years and then you went back again

LUCILLE: I retired after Father Springer died and I was called back. I was only off about a year and three months and I was called back. So I have been there now just working on this section of the work posting contributions

ELOISE: That's a buzy place to work?

LUCILLE: Oh, it really is. Now, they have two in the

office all the time. The phone is always ringing  
ELOISE: Did people come to the rectory a lot for personal problems?

ART: They used to take care of the cemetery there

LUCILLE: They originally took care of the cemetery too. They had all the files there. We used to take care of the buses. We had 5 buses and books for them and envelopes for them. We had to record their contributions and send bills out too. So there were a lot of little things we had to do they don't have now. We had the Catholic Charities office there and I had to take their calls. They came once a week so I had an accumulation of their calls

ART: You had the payroll for the school too

LUCILLE: Yes, we had the whole business end

ELOISE: Was there just you? You did it all

LUCILLE: Yes

ELOISE: You had to work all the time, you didn't waste a minute

LUCILLE: I worked from the time I got there. I had to know shorthand. No coffee breaks

ELOISE: That was a help to you to have all those office skills

LUCILLE: Oh, yes. I think one of the nice things Father Inkrott did was to have the church history and the minutes of the council meetings. This came in handy many times

ELOISE: So, at the end of the year it was your job to write up a summary of the year's happenings

LUCILLE: Well, he dictated that. He gave me letters everyday even when he was sick in the hospital. I had to go out and take shorthand. He thought that was very important. I would have to transcribe the history of the church and mark it in the big book. I didn't type it. I had to write it. The book is still there. It has a lot of the history of the parish

ELOISE: Can you remember anything humorous or funny that happened when you were working?

ART: We used to have a truant officer and he would make visits to the school regularly and the kids were really scared when you mentioned his name which was Zurcher. They had discipline in those days. There were rumors he had a paddling machine in his office. Any kid who got out of line, they would threaten them by saying they would send them to Zurcher's. That helped the discipline in those days.

ELOISE: Do you see much of a change now? Do you think there is a real big change in the church? Or, do you think the church is pretty much the same?

ART: When we had missions or special services, the church would be packed

LUCILLE: During 40 Hours, you would have to come early to get a seat. The church was always packed. I don't think the people go to church like they used to

ELOISE: Do you think these special services are important?

ART: Even the Novena services on Friday nights would be packed. Maybe it was just the times, I guess this was during World War II. People had more devotion and had someone to pray for. Perhaps, television and all the outside interests people don't care. At closing of 40 Hours, now, the church is only half full. They fill the church 5 times on Sunday, but one evening during the week, it is only half full

ELOISE: Do you think it is harder for parents to raise their kids?

LUCILLE: Oh, I think it is much harder

ELOISE: The church is far more lenient now about marriages of different faiths. Do you think this is better?

ART: I think this is good. Years ago you were either in or out

ELOISE: How do you think the church is going now? Do you think that St. Mary's is being more active than it used to be, involving more parishioners?

LUCILLE: Oh, I think it is more active. There are a lot of committees

ELOISE: Do you have any feelings about what the church should be doing? Do you have some things you would like to see happen over there?

ART: I don't know if it's good to take so many of the activities away from the church and have them over to the school. Like Christ Renews His Parish, where years ago we had the retreat in church and we packed the church. However, I don't know how many people are involved

ELOISE: Those are small groups of about 40

ART: We have been trying so hard to get help for St. Vincent de Paul Society, and we asked Father Donnelly if he had any ideas and he referred us to people involved in Christ Renews His Parish. They seem all enthused but in a couple of weeks they seem to cool off and you don't hear anymore from them

ELOISE: What do you do in the St. Vincent de Paul? How many are there of you?

ART: There are 10 active members, but anyone can belong. Our main activity right now is helping needy families before they can get on food stamps or welfare. There is a time before things



are available and we give them temporary help, but that got out of hand. In February about 20 people came to the house and we spent about \$400. But we could not keep that up very long, so now we are just going to work through welfare and through the CAC. They can screen them better than we can

ELOISE: Are there a lot of people in need?

ART: We had 20 in one month, but they are kind of repeaters. When they once know you help them, they then tell their friends, so it just got out of hand. Sometimes, we also work through the rectory if they get any requests over there

ELOISE: You would like more men to help you?

ART: Certain times of the year as during the clothing collection, we need more help. This is our biggest physical activity as we have to pack the clothes. We pack over 3,000 pounds of clothes in two days — about 78 boxes of clothes which go to New York, for the Bishops' clothing drive, which goes all over the world depending where the need is. Where there might be a disaster as in an earthquake. Lot of it went to Vietnam and countries in the Middle East. I've been doing this for 30 years now, the secretary's job

ELOISE: You are very loyal people

ART: Seems like when we get started on something like Lucille working over there

ELOISE: You are the kind of people they like to get. You are right there

ART: I was in the choir almost 50 years. I retired last year. We had to look after my mother and things got to heavy for us. We had to taper off a little bit

ELOISE: Are you worried that there will be none to take your job?

ART: You can't get young people to take over. Same as the Holy Name men. It is the same ones year after year. However, with St. Vincent de Paul, when you need help everybody does come forward if you get on the phone

ELOISE: Do you feel the people of St. Mary's have been generous to their church? They've always helped it out?

LUCILLE: Nine hundred ninety some envelopes are there. We always count the envelopes here. We have 2700 boxes out. So that's only about one third

ART: You wonder what is happening

LUCILLE: What about the other two-thirds?

ELOISE: Are you satisfied with St. Mary's? Have you ever thought about or been in another part of town where you might find another Catholic church? You're happy here

LUCILLE: I am very happy at St. Mary's and I wouldn't think of joining another church

ART: We are so used to it, it is just like you would think of leaving your family. This is our family too

LUCILLE: This is a big part of our life

ELOISE: Do you feel it has played a big role in the community — helping other people and giving a good image to Sandusky as far as supporting the community and that sort of thing?

ART: Yes, I think this ecumenical thing, it really lets people know what St. Mary's is doing. With the concert Sunday, there were a lot of non-Catholic people there. Years ago they were afraid to go in a Catholic church, they might get contaminated. The choirs these last years have combined, and the Bishop went over to the Lutheran church last year for the service

ELOISE: You don't think the church has changed very much basically?

LUCILLE: Not basically, I think it is just these superficial fringes

ELOISE: It doesn't bother you that you receive communion in your hand?

ART: It does bother me that they take the Blessed Sacrament out of the church. After all that is the church. I can understand taking out the statues as they were distracting. But, now it seems like so many of these churches are even taking the tabernacle out of the central part of the church

ELOISE: You'd rather have it back?

ART: Yes, because that is why we are going to church - God and the presence of God

ELOISE: Do you like the altar facing the people best?

ART: That makes sense. In the old days everything was Latin, so you just followed the misselette. This change didn't bother us either. We adapted to that. I think that was an improvement too. All the prayers and epistles in English made you feel more a part of it. My only objection is taking the tabernacle out

# Evelyn Bing

ELOISE: How important has the church been in your career and your life?

EVELYN: All my life

ELOISE: You were born here in Sandusky — born and raised in the church?

EVELYN: My parents belonged to the church

ELOISE: Your grandparents — they came from Germany?

EVELYN: Yes

ELOISE: What part of Germany, do you know?

EVELYN: My grandfather came from Prussia, which is no more. I forgot where my grandmother came from. Eventually they got to be neighbors. When my grandfather decided to come to America, he asked my grandmother if she would marry him. They never went together. They knew each other. He was going to come to America, and wanted to bring her over as his wife and then they came over. He had a couple of sisters over here.

ELOISE: Was that why he decided to come to Sandusky?

EVELYN: Yes, in the area. They built a house on Stone Street. That was my grandparent's house. Then, of course, they had a big backyard where they could have pigs and farm animals, chickens and a big garden. They always had a pew in church; they paid rent at that time.

ELOISE: Oh really, what year was this?

EVELYN: It was in 18 something

ELOISE: Oh, really, the late 1800's

EVELYN: Yes, because my mother was born during 85

ELOISE: Oh, so they must have been founders

EVELYN: The church was being built, I think. I know they always had a pew on St. Mary's side and they always went to either the nine or 9 30. I imagine it was the 9 00 Mass at that time. When we would go to church we would always sit in my grandfather's pew. I don't know whether it meant anything.

ELOISE: It was sentimental to you anyway

EVELYN: Yes, and my mother went to the old school. It was at the sisters' house, and of course my father wasn't Catholic.

ELOISE: But the family was raised Catholic

EVELYN: We were raised Catholic. My sister Margie was always pokey on Sunday mornings and she was never ready and my Dad would get after her to get going. He thought we should go and he never objected. As I said I started school in the new building.

ELOISE: Were you in the first class that graduated?

EVELYN: The first full class. Lillian was the first four

year one

ELOISE: Lillian Fievet. What year was that?

EVELYN: That was in 1923

ELOISE: And then you were 1924

EVELYN: 1924 and there were 13 in our class. Ten girls and three boys. One was Carl Klueg

ELOISE: Are they still all alive?

EVELYN: No, Carl died and Richard Jump died. He lived in Cleveland later on. Russell Smith is still alive. They were the three boys. We have two girls that have died, Lucille Smith, she was Lucille Laepply, and Lucille Herb Bond. Otherwise, we are all poking around yet. All still in Sandusky, Alice Ringholz who lives in Cleveland. We had German in school until I was in the third grade. Our catechism, at that time, were half German and half English. One page was German and one page was English.

ELOISE: Did you have to go to church everyday?

EVELYN: Church every morning

ELOISE: Did they have a lot of social doings when you were up there in high school? Were you allowed to go out or did they keep you pretty much segregated?

EVELYN: No, we weren't. But my mother when she went, they were segregated. They had a girls' school and a boys' school, but we didn't. Once in awhile the nun would get after you if you went out the night before with a boy, and you didn't know your homework.

ELOISE: If you only had 13 graduates, you didn't have very many teachers

EVELYN: Well, I don't know. Sister Sulpicia was the principal. Sister Aloise was the Latin teacher. These are the main ones in my mind. You were in a room with your homeroom teacher. We didn't do much moving around except our chemistry and physics class were up there in the annex. My senior year the one side of the annex was my homeroom. When I was in high school, Father Strack was here and they put on that musical "Fiddiesticks". That wasn't just for the high school; it took in the young people of the parish too.

ELOISE: Did they have catechism classes for kids that didn't go to the Catholic school? You either went or you didn't go?

EVELYN: Yes, that's right. Course what they had which didn't affect anybody in my class, but when it came First Communion time, they had to come to St. Mary's for two or three weeks. Like coming in from Castalia, they has no buses.

ELOISE: Did the church have a lot of goings on,



parties or festivals or was it just like it is now just a couple a year?

EVELYN: Well, I think there were more activities Young Ladies Sodality, of course, when you got to be older then they changed it to the Altar and Rosary, but they were very active

ELOISE: That was for all women in the church, any age?

EVELYN: Yes. When we got to be seniors we automatically went into the Society

ELOISE: What kind of things did they do?

EVELYN: Oh, they did a lot for the festival. Made things a lot more than they do now I remember organizations had the different booths. I suppose they have that now too. I remember one year after I was out of school that we went into Cleveland, a wholesale house, and bought handkerchiefs. We had a handkerchief booth. Course nowadays we use kleenex

ELOISE: Everybody pitched in and helped. People helped more than they do now or is it about the same?

EVELYN: I don't know. I would say it is about the same as now. I do think they had more fun Things were a lot cheaper. We went through the depression when nobody had anything

ELOISE: How were the priests then? Were they very active?

EVELYN: Well, Father Strack was but not in the school but after school He has since died, he was a go-getter. I think the next year after I graduated or two years, Father Fralick came and he was made the priest principal. I worked for Father Fralick

ELOISE: That was your first boss?

EVELYN: Well Sister Sulpicia was my first boss. She was my senior teacher

ELOISE: You started right after graduation?

EVELYN: No, I went to college about six weeks and I cried so much they brought me home. My dad you know traveled and we didn't have a car. He got on the train with me, took me to Bowling Green, dropped me off and there I was. So I cried a lot and the priest at Bowling Green was so nice He wanted me to stick it out, I got sick and then I couldn't take it anymore. I came home and I wasn't a week and then I suppose it was Sister Sulpicia called and I went down there. I shouldn't say this, maybe you didn't have to have a degree you know, and so I taught Cicero

ELOISE: Oh Latin! Third or fourth year?

EVELYN: Third year We had four years Latin and two years French, four years math, two years



science, chemistry and physics. I don't think they had biology when I was in high school but it came right after that

ELOISE: You taught then for a while?

EVELYN: Yes. I taught shorthand and typing, maybe over a period of three years. Then it was time to do the office work and then I went to summer school. One summer Lillian Fievet and I went to Notre Dame in Cleveland. We took the street car over to Case Western Reserve and Library Science That's where I learned to mend books and catalog books and things like that. Then I had the office and the library was in the office so I handled both of them. But as you say the classes started to get bigger and bigger and eventually I was just in the office

ELOISE: You were a jack of all trades. I remember one year you sewed the curtain in the gym

EVELYN: I made the drapes, stage drapes

ELOISE: How did you manage that?

EVELYN: During the depression I even lined a baby buggy for somebody. Father Reynolds made me line a baby buggy He was the type that would say if you can't do, I will do it myself. You got to work early in the morning and a lot of times it was 6 o'clock before you got home. And of course, your salary was nothing

ELOISE: But you enjoyed it?

EVELYN: I really did. Oh, I suppose sometimes I got mad and lost my temper



ELOISE: Did the school work real closely with the church at that time?

EVELYN: I would say so

ELOISE: The pastor had a lot of influence?

EVELYN: Well the pastor always came over and handed out the report cards. If you didn't have a report card he would let you know and I know in grade school when Father Widmann would come over everybody would stand up and say Praise be Jesus Christ and then he would talk to us. We had a truant officer come in and put the fear of the Lord in us. He used to visit the school regularly and talk to the kids

ELOISE: This was in high school too?

EVELYN: No, not so much in high school. It was more grade school. It wasn't like now, we walked to school. I lived in the west end right near Holy Angels church and walked every day to St. Mary's, home for lunch, back at noon and then at night. We never had a car. We wasted a lot of time playing on the way but it was good

ELOISE: After you were working there at school in the office, the pastor still had a lot of influence about what was going on?

EVELYN: Yes

ELOISE: Did you notice that change over the years after you were there?

EVELYN: Of course, when Father Reynolds came he was a school man and he had good discipline. Nobody ever talked back to him. Father was there until World War II and then he went into the Army. At that time they had a lot of respect for the priests and sisters. We never talked back to them, nobody got away with anything. They thought they did sometimes but they really didn't

ELOISE: How big was the school then?

EVELYN: My sister graduated two years after in 1926. There were 20 some in her class and there were 13 in my class

ELOISE: Do you think that the influence of St. Mary's in the community, was it limited or was St. Mary's influence felt by the community?

EVELYN: Oh, I think so. To a certain extent

ELOISE: Do you think it had a good influence? Do you think we had a good image to the public?

EVELYN: In the early years we didn't have a gym or anything. We always used Sandusky High's gym on Columbus Avenue. That way they always worked together. Like the football field, we still do. Now they have their own practice field. The kids never had a practice field. They played their games out there

ELOISE: You felt the cooperation with the city

school

EVELYN: Was very good

ELOISE: Do you think the priests have made an effort to get out into their Catholic community or did they confine themselves to St. Mary's?

EVELYN: It was a German parish. There was a time if you didn't have a German ancestor, you couldn't get in the parish. You weren't allowed to get in, you had to go to one of the other parishes.

ELOISE: Was that good or bad?

EVELYN: I think in a way it was bad. Sometimes you lived right in the area

ELOISE: Is St. Mary's still important to you?

EVELYN: I think so. I don't go any other place

ELOISE: You still volunteer your help at the festival?

EVELYN: I try to. I do some hospital volunteer. Since I'm ill I don't go out there but I do make these bedsocks for the festival, and caps and scarves

ELOISE: Did you have a lot of girl friends when you were in school?

EVELYN: Yes. I still have them. Your friends were close by because you had to walk. You weren't afraid to walk at night

ELOISE: Do you feel the changes that were made in the church? Do you find it harder to concentrate on your faith? Do you think that the younger people that are raised in the new methods will be as faithful to the church as you older people?

EVELYN: I don't think so. I really don't. I don't know. I don't have any experience. I couldn't tell you. They get away with so much.

ELOISE: You don't think they feel the obligation to support their church that you did?

EVELYN: No, I don't think they do. That's part of the problem. We have had assistants that told the kids they didn't have to put their envelope in. We had to put ours in if we only had a nickel

ELOISE: Their idea is you should only do it if you want to. Is that being too idealistic? Is that too idealistic to be moved by faith alone?

EVELYN: Yes. You have to be taught. You have to know right from wrong, and they don't know now

ELOISE: We had a lot of fellowship down there. We enjoyed being with each other. A lot of spirit of belonging to the church and the school

EVELYN: You were always loyal to the school and the church. We'd just as soon get up and fight if anything was said against it. Even if they were right.

ELOISE: They did command a lot of loyalty from you people. You had a lot of admiration for it. Do you think that was due because they had more



# *The Rev. Raymond Etzel*

DEAN: When were you here at Sandusky, St. Mary's, father?

REV. ETZEL: I came there in the summer of 1954 and left there September, 1961

DEAN: And you were principal of the high school all the while you were there, father?

REV. ETZEL: Yes

DEAN: When you left St. Mary's, you went to another assignment as principal or did you go on to be the superintendent of schools?

REV. ETZEL: All the time I was at St. Mary's I was assistant superintendent

DEAN: For the diocese?

REV. ETZEL: Yes, I bore that title and I came up here as superintendent and assistant principal of Central for four years and I was full time in the school office from then on

DEAN: Miss Evelyn Bing was here at that time?

REV. ETZEL: Miss Bing ran the place. We never had to worry because she knew everything from the beginning. She started there right after her graduation from high school and was really the high school for many years. Of course, Lillian Fievet was very close too, but she had been away for four years while she went to college

DEAN: And you had duties in the parish itself?

REV. ETZEL: Yes, I was an assistant at that time. I was first assistant there during all that time I was there

DEAN: Now as your duties as principal over there—were you chaplain and everything or did you have one of the priests assisting or teaching or something?

REV. ETZEL: At that time we had priests coming in from, Father Kaufman came in from Holy Angels, and Father Lemko came in from Sts. Peter and Paul. Later on it was Father Miller as long as it remained somewhat interparochial. The priests from the other two schools helped teach the religion

DEAN: While you were there was there any extensive program, building or anything that was going on?

REV. ETZEL: From the time I got there we had plans. Of course, I got there just before you celebrated your 100th anniversary of the parish and that was a big thing to get ready for. I suppose you have Sister Virginia's history book that she wrote up at that time. We were ready for that big celebration. It was quite an affair. June of '55 and then the next day with a vengeance, from floor to ceiling. That was a tremendous building project. At that time it also included the addition of the

annex and back part of the rectory and we hardly got finished with that and Father Inkrott started the new school, the grade school on Decatur Street

DEAN: Is there anything you can reflect on in your time here at St. Mary's?

REV. ETZEL: We added a grade school and we kept building at that time until about 420 students at that time and we came to a saturation point with the grade school and high school. The greatest disappointment, of course, was when the students from the other two schools became restricted about my last two years there. We only took in a certain percentage of those that applied from Sts. Peter and Paul and Holy Angels because we just couldn't accommodate anymore. That was a great disappointment but it has been overcome now that it has been centralized. They are all on an equal footing

DEAN: Do you see that as a very positive step in a healthy school system, to be centralized?

REV. ETZEL: We had it in many ways, as I say, with the participation of the parishes and, of course, we had the Sisters of St. Francis there at that time, more or less representing Sts. Peter and Paul and the Sisters of Mercy, two Sisters of St. Francis, two Sisters of Mercy because it was considered, to some extent an interparochial school. The priests from those parishes taught. The problem was we reached the saturation point and they just didn't feel they could build anymore at that time. We had to limit them so they kind of ceased being truly interparochial at that time. When I was there, I look back and Evelyn Bing or somebody said they were going to a 25th anniversary, I thought they were ancient, but I changed my ideas now on what 25 years means

I hope I can be part of your celebration when it comes about. I was down there — Father Nieset and I were down there a couple months ago. I guess it was about two months ago during Catholic School's Week. They did a very fine job that day and I'm glad to see that both schools, Sts. Peter and Paul and Holy Angels there



## *Celia Kromer,*



## *Clara Baier,*



ELOISE: Do you want to tell me your name and how old you are?

MISS HARTLEIB: My name is Katherine Hartleib. I'm 84 years old, I'm not ashamed.

ELOISE: Mrs. Kromer, your first name is?

MRS. KROMER: Celia Kromer, 82.

ELOISE: And Marie Schippel?

MRS. SCHIPPEL: 80.

MRS. BAIER: Clara Baier, 85.

ELOISE: I would like to know about your backgrounds a little bit. How long have you been members of St. Mary's?

TOGETHER: All our lives.

ELOISE: You were born and raised in this church?

TOGETHER: Born and raised here.

ELOISE: You two are sisters, Mrs. Kromer and Mrs. Schippel. You were born and raised here in Sandusky and have been members of the church all your lives? And you too, Mrs. Baier. How about you Miss Hartleib?

MISS HARTLEIB: 1912.

ELOISE: Did you move here then?

MISS HARTLEIB: Yes, from Germany.

ELOISE: And how old were you?

MISS HARTLEIB: 16.

ELOISE: What part of Germany did you come from?

MISS HARTLEIB: I was born in Bonn.

MRS. BAIER: My people came from Austria, I know.

A strikers they called them.

MISS HARTLEIB: I had a cousin and he was a policeman stationed in Austria. He died just a few years ago.

ELOISE: Why did you decide to come to Sandusky? Did you have family here?

MISS HARTLEIB: Yes, we had relatives living in Detroit and my oldest brother, he wasn't quite seventeen. They got drafted in Germany and before he was seventeen, my mother and father wrote to relatives there and one was a priest and he found that letter and he answered right back we should send him, you know, that he should come. That was in 19... let's see when was that again? He was seventeen years old.

ELOISE: In 1912.

MISS HARTLEIB: We came to Sandusky, but he went to Detroit first. We had some friends living here. They came from the same place we came. So he came to Sandusky and he got a job here you know and he was here thirteen months and we came over and he wrote us we should come, you know. And so when we came over, you know the place, Sandusky Foundry & Machine Co. Of course, the others were all small, they were all younger, they all went to school here. I was too old for school.

ELOISE: Now you two ladies.



## Marie Schippel,



MRS. SCHIPPEL: I was born in Perkins Township, now where were you born Celia?

MRS. KROMER: Perkins Township and we moved to Margarett Township and when I was going to the third grade, we went to Sandusky St. Mary's. We drove, horse and buggy. We got up every morning and drove to school. From Margarett-Old Railroad, five miles about

ELOISE: What did you do? You mean your Dad had to bring you in every day?

MRS. KROMER: No, we drove

ELOISE: What did you do with the horses?

MRS. KROMER: Put them in the barn at John Good's on Putnam Street. And walked to St. Mary's. And we went there three years and when we went back out into the one room school at Margarett, we had to walk a mile to go to school and a mile home

ELOISE: Didn't you stay at St. Mary's?

MRS. KROMER: No, I just went about three years

MRS. SCHIPPEL: I went through the seventh grade

ELOISE: How long did it take you to take that buggy in?

MRS. KROMER: An hour

ELOISE: After you hitched it up and an hour in and an hour out?

MRS. KROMER: Unhitched the horse and walked to St. Mary's up Putnam St. We did that for three

## Katherine Hartleib



years. Rain or snow. And one time the horse wouldn't take us. It was storming and I was very determined. I wanted to go to school, I didn't want to miss a day and we started out and we got about half way and we couldn't do anything with him, he just turned around and took us home. We used to drive every day. It was a big chore, I thought it was anyway

ELOISE: You were pretty young to do that, to have a horse to take care of like that

LADIES: Our grandfather wanted to give us a Catholic education. Catholic school for three years, so we did that, we went there to prepare for our First Holy Communion, Confirmation

MRS. KROMER: Ya, we had some grades in there but I didn't go in there. We used to prepare for the annual spring show they used to put on. I don't remember if it was a show or what you call it. I remember we sang the song of lilies white, lilies white, neath the sky blue and bright, in God's heaven, — I'm stalled

ELOISE: Did you have a May program, like a May Festival with costumes and everything?

MRS. KROMER: The girls were dressed up

ELOISE: The school couldn't have been too big at that time

MRS. KROMER: No, they didn't have like 50 in one grade like they do today. there were 20 - 25. In

the school, in the convent, then, there wasn't even that many

It was much nicer then, you could hand down the clothes like people in them days had large families and you could hand them down. But today they have these uniforms and they don't hand them down. I think they last a long time. Back in them times we had our own clothes. You know, we could change clothes

ELOISE: How long did you go to school?

MRS. KROMER: Went through the 8th grade and that was it

ELOISE: That's all the further they sent you, didn't they?

MRS. KROMER: In that day and age

ELOISE: Who did you have for teachers? Did you have the nuns?

MRS. KROMER: I had Sister Bernard

MRS. SCHIPPEL: I had four different sisters in the high school. I can't remember the names

ELOISE: What kind of trouble did you get into in grade school?

MRS. KROMER: We were quiet country girls, I guess. I know one morning Sister said no coming in late and I wouldn't go in it was cold, I wouldn't go in, I waited until recess and I first went in. I didn't want to go in

ELOISE: What was it like then? Did they have the class mixed, boys and girls?

MRS. KROMER: Yes, we went to school in the sisters' house. School was in the sisters' house, that's where I went, anyhow

MRS. BAIER: I started in the old church. The old church, that was my first grade. The old every day if we wanted to or wear it two or three days and then change to something else. With uniforms you can't do that

ELOISE: What did you study in school?

MRS. KROMER: Arithmetic, catechism, geography. At that time it was geography. Today it's history. Penmanship. And drawing was something I needed. I got one good report card when I got 100 all the way down and I wanted to save that and I think I still have it but I can't come across it. Perfect 100's all the way down

ELOISE: So then when you got out of school in the eighth grade did you have to go to work then or were you done with school?

MRS. KROMER: Ya, we both went to work after we got out of school. I can't remember. You stayed home. My mother was — she peddled vegetables. My mother was a widow with nine children and we had to help. Her maiden name was Good

We had to help her in the garden and all the work until some of the younger ones got old enough to help her so we went to work

MRS. SCHIPPEL: I went to work when I was nineteen

MRS. KROMER: I went to work when I was twenty

MRS. SCHIPPEL: You could be more regular, more attentive, we could always get in every Sunday. We lived in the country, but sometimes we went in the bobsled, two horses and a bobsled and we heated up a stone to keep our feet warm, but we got to church. It takes a long time to get in with horses. It's not like you got a heated car. Once in a while when the snow banks were too high sometimes they were as high as the wire fence we didn't go, so we prayed the rosary at home. The family would gather around and pray the rosary

ELOISE: Do you remember when you first started getting active in the church? You went to St. Mary's because it was a German church, is that why?

MRS. SCHIPPEL: Ya, we always belonged to St. Mary's. They had the sermon in German and the Mass. My mother used to always take us to or see that we went because she used to drive the horses when we were kids and they had Forty Hours, she took us to church

ELOISE: You went all three days

MRS. SCHIPPEL: Right. The closing was the biggest, you know, the largest attended. You couldn't find a seat. We wouldn't even find room in the church. It's so different today

ELOISE: Do you think that's good or bad?

MRS. SCHIPPEL: Well, I don't know whether it's good or bad but it's surely different

ELOISE: Why is it they don't make such a big thing out of Forty Hours?

MRS. BAIER: The young ones don't want to, so they don't go and then the older people some of them can't get there. That's another thing, I think

MRS. SCHIPPEL: Well, I think the missionaries when they came, I think there were usually three and they really put it across. Today, I don't — they used to pound the table . . . and they really put it across if you didn't go to church. And the Ten Commandments, they would have sermons on the Ten Commandments and I think that is missed today. The Ten Commandments. They have a lot of sermons on love, which is good, I have nothing against that, but I think they ought to preach more on the Ten Commandments. I think they ought to be brought out



ELOISE: Sometimes they make it your own decision and you don't have enough background to make a decision

MRS. SCHIPPEL: They don't have the faith, I guess

ELOISE: Do you think people are supporting the church now? Masses are crowded on Sunday

MRS. SCHIPPEL: They were on Easter. Easter and Christmas. You wonder where all those Catholics are other times. My youngest son and his wife went over to 9 30 Mass. They go there every Sunday and they were packed to the doors so they went over to Sts. Peter and Paul's for 10:00 Mass to get inside

ELOISE: How do you feel the changes in the church have been as far as when you were raising your families. Did you find the church a good place to work with and have good relations. Did you ever consider going to another church?

MRS. SCHIPPEL: I don't even want to go to the community thing, what is it?

ELOISE: You don't feel like you are in church unless you are in St. Mary's?

MRS. SCHIPPEL: Right

ELOISE: Do you enjoy all the activities at the church?

MRS. KROMER: The Altar and Rosary Society meeting and any activity that comes up we always usually patronize. I was baptized raised, First Communion, everything in St. Mary's and I'll stay in St. Mary's as long as I live

ELOISE: Do you think St. Mary's has been a good influence on the community? Do you think it has had a strong influence. Mrs. Hartleib you came here when you were 16. You had all your Catholic training in Europe then?

MISS HARTLEIB: Yes. My mother had a store. One store for thirty-one years

ELOISE: Oh, is that your store over on Adams Street?

MISS HARTLEIB: We joined the young ladies sodality when we got here

ELOISE: Have you always found most of the priests have been accessible and helpful to you and come when you needed them?

MISS HARTLEIB: Yes

ELOISE: You were saying, Mrs. Schippel, that you didn't like that at first when they took out that old wooden altar, but then you got used to the new one?

MRS. SCHIPPEL: Ya, we got used to the new one

MRS. KROMER: The only thing, I think, they should have the tabernacle in the middle of the front altar

MRS. BAIER: Do you remember the pulpit how it was in the middle of the church?

MRS. KROMER: I remember that, there was a reason

ELOISE: How do you feel about the other changes now? Communion in the hand?

MRS. KROMER: I don't think that's right. I don't do it. When they had Communion on the television with the Pope, everyone received Communion on the tongue

MRS. HARTLEIB: I saw that too

MRS. KROMER: It doesn't appeal to me. I was taught never to touch the Sacred Host with your fingers

MRS. BAIER: We were all taught that way

MRS. KROMER: It just sort of sticks to me

ELOISE: I remember that. Boy, the priest really washed his hands. How about the Mass in English?

MRS. BAIER: I love that. I can understand it. I think I get more out of it

MRS. KROMER: I like the Latin songs

MRS. SCHIPPEL: Well, now that we got away from the Latin songs, like when we have Benediction and that, you are away from it and the English songs, now I like them

ELOISE: There's a lot of beauty in those old songs. How do you feel the people are supporting the church? Do you think they are giving as much financial support as they used to?

MRS. BAIER: I think they are giving more. Collections are way up. They are getting more now than they did years ago

MISS HARTLEIB: \$2,000 to \$2500. It used to be years ago when Father Moore was here

MRS. BAIER: The Christmas collections and all of them are much higher. I think they are doing a lot better than they did.

MISS HARTLEIB: Much better

ELOISE: How about all the activities going on, they have a lot of things going on?

LADIES: We can't attend them all, but we try

MRS. SCHIPPEL: There were so many ladies that signed up for the Altar Society and there was such a small number went up to the communion rail to be installed — should I say?

ELOISE: Can you tell me just essentially how you feel about St. Mary's?

LADIES: I wouldn't change

ELOISE: It hasn't made any difference who the priests were. Anything you would like to see them do or help out more. How do you think it's going to be 20 years from now?

MISS HARTLEIB: We won't be here anymore. Let them decide

ELOISE: What do you think would be a good way to go, if you were going to be here?

MISS HARTLEIB: I don't know what is going to happen in this world

MRS. SCHIPPEL: You know when the church was first made over by Father Inkrott, I thought he made a mistake when he put the two front confessionals and took out those seats. But it doesn't really matter too much today because they have the masses said out more. Do you understand what I mean? The church isn't as crowded as it used to be. Where formerly in the old church, the way the old seats were, you used to be able to get four in the seats real easy and six in the center aisle and I thought he made a mistake because right where those confessionals are in the side aisles in the front, you could see right up to the middle altar. That was the perfect spot to see up to the altar and the confessionals should have been put to the back wall

MRS. KROMER: The confessionals were in the front, weren't they?

MRS. BAIER: I can't even picture it anymore, how they were

MRS. SCHIPPEL: There were no doors in the back, remember? Then they took out the seats and put them down. Well, now they got the masses so spread out and they got Saturday night masses and Sunday, which I would never attend

MRS. KROMER: That doesn't appeal to me. I don't want that. Once in a while if you have to go out of town real early Sunday morning all right then I'll pick a night but otherwise I come to church, go to confession, it's almost 4.00. No, I'll go home and come to Mass on Sunday morning which I feel is the proper day for Mass

ELOISE: Years ago you felt this was one church and this was another church

MRS. BAIER: I think the three churches work together. It's real nice they're all in, the three churches.

MRS. KROMER: You know when Father Armitage was at Holy Angels, I went to Novena Services on Sunday night for 21 years

MISS HARTLEIB: I used to go there too

MRS. SCHIPPEL: They had it in the afternoon and then they changed it to the evening

MRS. BAIER: The Sorrowful Mother Novena

MRS. KROMER: That was beautiful

MRS. BAIER: My mother and I used to walk over there together

ELOISE: Is your faith just as strong? Do you think the young people have as much faith as you ladies have shown and raised your families so well

MRS. KROMER: Some of them do. They took away the different saints, you don't honor them anymore. I don't know why. They are saints today, just as well as way back

MRS. SCHIPPEL: You pray to the saints to reach Jesus, don't you? That's what we were taught and that's the way I believe. You have to pray to the saints to reach Jesus

MRS. KROMER: We have the Little Flower Study Club. Every feast day, which is the first of October, we go to Mass and we go to breakfast that morning. One time we go to Sts. Peter & Paul's, one time we go to St. Mary's

ELOISE: Is that a very large group?

MRS. KROMER: No, there's about eight of us

ELOISE: Anything else you would like to say about your feelings?

MRS. BAIER: I joined my church and I love my church

LADIES: We all do

ELOISE: Do you think now the church is being much more understanding? Before you know the mixed marriages were so frowned on, but now they are more accepting

MRS. KROMER: Is it good? I don't know. You wonder

MRS. BAIER: You wonder sometimes

MRS. KROMER: How that can be right

ELOISE: Well, it shows acceptance of the other person's faith. Is it better to keep the family together than to lose one or the other?

MRS. BAIER: In a way it's good too. Where there's children, it is bad. It's a hard thing for us older people to understand

MRS. KROMER: We were brought up that way, the old school

ELOISE: For better or worse you stayed together. If you made a mistake with your marriage you stuck it out

LADIES: Right

ELOISE: But, now they seem to think why spend your life in suffering

MRS. SCHIPPEL: I think there's a lot of fighting because of mixed marriages and then the children. They end up in a divorce

MISS HARTLEIB: Wasn't there a time when the priest said it was an original sin when they don't go to church

MRS. KROMER: Oh, ya, there was a time



# Lee Zierolf

ELOISE: Lee, you went to the University of Dayton?

LEE: I went to the University of Dayton. I graduated from the University of Dayton. Do you want my background?

ELOISE: Yes, just a little bit of your background

LEE: When I graduated from the University of Dayton they did not have physical education at Dayton. And my last two years, I took pre-med and I was going to go. They had a deal with the University of St. Louis and some of the students in Dayton, my junior year, went to St. Louis and Dr. Tight was one of them. He wasn't an athlete at the time. But St. Louis quit football when I would have been a junior. So that took care of that. So then in my junior and senior year I took physical education courses on Wednesday and Thursday nights, 7:30 to 9:30 and on Saturday morning from 8 to 12. So I had a teaching certificate and Father Reynolds was pushing me then after that. After he hired me, I didn't have one hour of physical education.

ELOISE: But your uncle, Monsignor Zierolf, he didn't want you here because you were relation? But Father Reynolds wanted to hire you?

LEE: Yes, he did.

ELOISE: For \$1,400. a year

LEE: I don't know. It wasn't very damn much.

ELOISE: That was back in 1932. You taught seven periods a day and coached all the sports with no assistants. I can't believe all this.

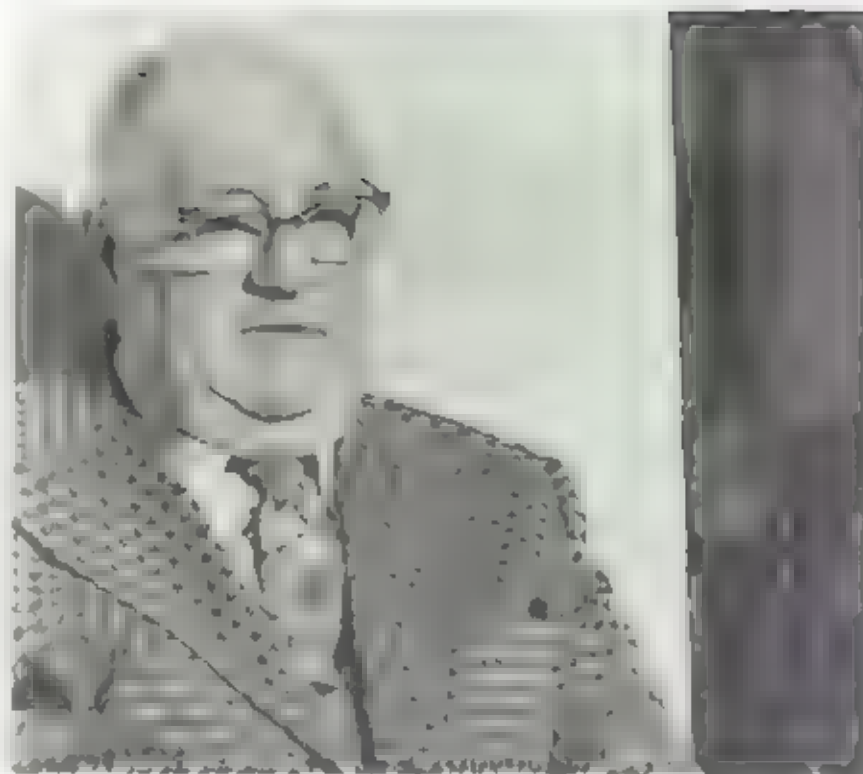
LEE: Well, see then, I didn't have any physical education. And then it came up some time later in the 30's. It seems to me it might have been '35 or '36, if you didn't have a major in physical education then you couldn't coach. And then later on, I think it was like '39 they were talking about master's degree. So the first year I was out of Dayton, I went to Wittenberg College. Then I got the credits I could use there and then the next year I went to the University of Indiana to get the rest of them. Then the next four summers . . . you might as well do it because by 1938 or '39 you're going to have to have a master's degree, so I went to Columbia the next four summers.

ELOISE: It was costing you money to work at St. Mary's?

LEE: Yes it did. I told Father Reynolds then. If I can't make a living, now, I'm going to quit. So, that's how I got my physical education. I got a master's in that. I got a major in chemistry, a major in physics, English and more stuff.

ELOISE: So, they expected you to be pretty versatile.

LEE: Versatile. According to my life time certificate,



I can teach nine subjects

ELOISE: When did you retire from St. Mary's?

LEE: 1953

ELOISE: What was the enrollment about then?

LEE: About, I'm going to say, it was closer to 300 because that was the year I quit. Sonny Herzog, Butch Wagner, Spider Miller and they were all unhappy. They came out to the hospital and wanted to know if I would sit on the bench with them. They were Class A so they had to have in excess of 125 boys at that time. Now what the rules and regulations, they have changed so many times. Oh, gosh, I can't remember all that.

ELOISE: The school was directly under the control of the church at that time?

LEE: 100%. It was under the control of Father Reynolds.

ELOISE: Who was an assistant at St. Mary's?

LEE: He was an assistant. And anytime anything came up, they went to my uncle and he said you see Father Reynolds. Father Reynolds ran it and he ran it 100%.

ELOISE: Very strict person.

LEE: He sure was.

ELOISE: He ran a very tight ship.

LEE: If you walked in, honey and your dress was not where he put the yardstick there, he said go on home and come back when you get it down where it belongs.

ELOISE: What were some of the other funny things he did? He was strict but.

LEE: He was strict. Well, he used to come in my class and say, "Today you stank. I'll give you about 50%. You always had to have 3 or 4 refer-

ence books in your science classes in addition to the texts and maybe the next day your review was very good and your presentation of the new material was very good now today I would give you 95%." It made me feel pretty good. Then about 2 days later he would say, "Oh, you stank Lee," and after he did that for, oh gosh, I don't know how long. One day I came out of class and he says, "You know, Lee, you can teach for me anytime." and he never came back in my class after that. "Anytime you need me, you can teach for my anytime." I finally made out with him all right.

ELOISE: But he supervised your work pretty closely?

LEE: 100% he did, boy, and that is where we got into it on some of his supervision with his thinking. Well, you see Father Reynolds was a Brother of Mary and he taught at Cathedral Latin. He went to the University of Dayton and then he taught at the University of Dayton. How long he taught there I can't tell you but then he became a priest. He became a diocesan priest but he was really sewed up with Cathedral Latin and the University of Dayton. He was a real educator, by gosh, and I have to give the old boy credit for that and he was a tough organizer.

I imagine you don't have to do this now, but every week we had to hand in our program or synopsis of where we got the information on our science classes, what reference books, what we did and how much we covered in the text book what we covered in this, what outside material we had and honey, we gave that to him every Friday. You know what, he graded them baby, we got it back on Monday with a grade on it.

ELOISE: With all those subjects, you had all those different subjects.

LEE: Right. Well, I only had two at a time. As I said

ELOISE: But you had to have all those outside references to present.

LEE: Right. And if you had less than 3 or 4 he wasn't very happy with you.

ELOISE: Were the students forced . . . were they to use those references then, you made them available to the students?

LEE: No, we had to give it to them.

ELOISE: Oh, you had to give them the outside reference.

LEE: He wanted me to put it on the blackboard and make them take notes. When they walked in in the morning he wanted you to give them a 5

minute quiz every day and I had all those to grade and the first science class I had, I had 54 kids, so when I finished practicing football or basketball come home, my God, those papers . . . somebody said what are you doing, I just throw them up and what sticks on the ceiling I give them an "A" and the rest that come down I give them something different.

ELOISE: Oh boy, that was a lot of work.

LEE: Yes it was, honey, I agree. At least I thought it was.

ELOISE: Then there were all nuns, there weren't many lay teachers in that school.

LEE: I was the only lay teacher. Well, I am lying. I was the only man teacher and Lillian Fievet, well Evelyn Bing taught girl's gym. Father Reynolds wanted to know whether I would take it and I said no way. I got enough. This was back in 1940, was that 1943? I was ready to go in the Army or Navy — I could have gone in as a Second Lieutenant and Father Reynolds went down to the draft board and they made us instigate, I can't say the word I want to say, physical fitness program and they had this obstacle course out at Strobel Field so every night, well then I think it was Maurice McGory, God love him, he's dead now. I was the only man teacher outside of Father Reynolds and the other lay teachers was Lillian and Ev at that time and they said well, we can't draft him then. I said, I think I would rather go to the Army or Navy or Marines or whatever it is but I had to take those kids out there every night for, oh God, I don't know how many years we went through that — this obstacle course which they had out at Strobel Field.

ELOISE: Were you required to go to church very much then when you were there? Did you have a large participation in the church activities?

LEE: Yes, I told Norm Hoelzer, I can see why you stayed in shape. Norm Hoelzer, I can tell you a lot of them, but he sticks in my mind because he lived farther away. He lived out there on Filmore and Norm used to walk in to 6 o'clock Mass, walk home and get his breakfast, come back to school, walk home to noon lunch and then come back. I would say Norm went to church three or four times a week in the mornings, and I did, too. I'd give them hell if they didn't. Well, that's a mile or two miles till they got to school. That little billy goat, he walked four miles. That's why I didn't have to worry if they were staying in shape.

ELOISE: Was Mass required while you were in school?



LEE: No, it wasn't required, but it was sort of suggested that we always went to church on the day of the game. Most of the time before and also either after or the next day and I would say, the biggest part of those kids went to church

ELOISE: First Fridays?

LEE: Oh, gosh, yes honey, on First Fridays

ELOISE: Holy days?

LEE: Oh, yes. I'm going to say better than 50% of the time the kids went to church. I think so

ELOISE: Was religion a big thing in school? Was it an integral part of your studies?

LEE: You better believe it was. Father Reynolds thought if you didn't have religion and you flunked it and got thrown out . . . If you flunked religion, you went to Sandusky High. It was just that simple. Him and I had a few arguments on that, but I don't know

ELOISE: Do you think that's good or bad? Do you think things have improved or how do you feel?

LEE: I think the thing has changed so tremendously from the stand point of, well, I think the church has changed so tremendously. I was talking to one of the reverends a year or so ago. I said Lord when I was at the University of Dayton, when you went to communion, if you let the host touch your teeth or anything like that well that was — it wasn't a mortal sin but it was close to being a mortal sin. I still can't see why they do this

ELOISE: Putting it in your hand?

LEE: I can't buy it, honey. I just had it drilled through my head so much. For years and years and I can't change

ELOISE: How do you feel about some of these changes? About the openness of the church, do you think that's good?

LEE: Yes, I think that is good. I think it has brought a better understanding between the Catholics, the Lutherans, the Presbyterians, the Methodists and all the rest of them. When I came here in '32, it was even true between St. Pete's and Holy Angels. If you were an Irishman or Italian, and I was a German, you better not get on my side of Jackson Street or you'd get belted. I had a real compliment paid to me by Carl Whinnery and that was not too many years before he retired. Carl told me one day, "Lee, you know I think you done more.", and I hate to brag, and this is a brag. He said, "I think that right now between the Lutherans, the Catholics, and the rest of the non-Catholics, and the Catholics that you have done more to bring all of us together than any — He said something about the city commissioner. I think I

had as many Lutherans working for me as I did Catholics. In fact, I think I had more. He said "I think you have done a good job."

ELOISE: How do you feel about the change in all the pomp and circumstances in the church?

LEE: I was part of it. You see when I got out of my twenty odd years, Father Inkrott came here. I think it was within two days after he was here he came over here. He would come over and say I've got a bone to pick with you, Lee. When you found out I was going to be the pastor, you quit. I said I did not Father. I didn't know who was going to be the pastor. But, then I was a councilman and then you could only be a councilman for two years or something like that. Then I had to get off. So then the old bird, he had what he called the building committee and I was councilman three or four times. If I wasn't a councilman, then I was on the building committee. When I could run for council, then I was off the building committee

ELOISE: How long were you there?

LEE: I was there for ten years. Monsignor Inkrott, he was a great guy. I love him from the bottom of his toes to the top

When all this was changed around, I was a part of it. I have no regrets on that. I was always in favor of English because I was lousy at Latin.

ELOISE: How do you feel St. Mary's is as far as the church? Do you think it has been an asset to the community?

LEE: Oh, yes. I very definitely think the church and school has been a great asset to the city of Sandusky and surrounding areas. I think it has done a heck of a job. A real asset. Of course, I can only go back about forty-seven years or so

ELOISE: We've been centralized for about six or seven years

LEE: Something like that

ELOISE: Are there any comments you want to make about the Centralization? Centralization is more efficient, I think

LEE: I'd say that. I think it's more efficient. I think it's great. But, I have one little crumb down in the bottom of my gizzard. I'll tell you better after this drive. But, see, the people of St. Mary's built the school, built the church, done everything. And that's what I'm saying. And now, if they come in and pick up their share then I think it's very, very good. If they don't, then I'm not in favor of it. Maybe I'm wrong

ELOISE: I think a lot of people feel that way

LEE: You see, all the years I was there, the only a St. Mary's student cost them was their book bill. No



tutor, grade school, high school, a perry.  
We were supported there by St. Mary's. When  
the first student came from St. Peter's and Holy  
Angels and we had a couple that drove in here  
from Port Clinton. They were non-Catholic. What  
was their name? Stewart. Their parent lived in  
Port Clinton. These boys drove in here for four  
years that they were in high school. These kids  
paid \$40 a year.

ELC: SE: How do you feel about the strength of the  
faith of the people? Do you think it's the same?

LEE: No, it's not. I don't think the faith is nearly as  
strong and the reason I say that is if you look back  
years ago when they had Forty Hours devotion, if  
you didn't get there, honey, you wouldn't have  
got a seat. I mean it was bad to the bone.

ELC: SE: You know every person have interviewed  
so far has told me the same thing about Forty  
Hours. That must have been a tremendous thing.

LEE: It was. When 37 or 38 years ago, my mother was  
there and the 10 or 11 years, my father was there.

Mrs. Margaret Lusk. I'm sorry I can't remember. We  
used to have thirty or forty people there and  
to get a seat for the evening devotion started at  
7 or 7:30. If you came in at 30 you wouldn't get  
a seat. It was annex to the gas. I don't think I  
guess when Pope John and I went to mortal sin  
I think it was his forty mass at Mass. But they  
got pointed out. My head is a little bit and  
I'm.

ELC: SE: Do you think the tradition goes back to  
home tradition?

LEE: I think that has an awful lot to do with it.

ELC: SE: Do you think the religious has a lot of  
have kind of made?

LEE: I think that has a lot. It has made a great  
difference. But I don't if you ever missed Mass  
that was a mortal sin.

ELC: SE: Now they try to say you have to teach your  
faith out of love and not out of fear.

LEE: We yes, can kind of say that. But I think you  
have to have a little fear on the other side. I think  
you have to have the love. But that. From what  
I observe from people, I don't think they've  
pointed out them like we did, forty or fifty years  
ago.

# Clara Baier

ELOISE: This is an interview with Mrs. Clara Baier, 1408 Lindsley St. Mrs. Baier, how old are you?

CLARA: 85 years

ELOISE: Were you born and raised in Sandusky?

CLARA: In Sandusky

ELOISE: Have you always been a member of St. Mary's?

CLARA: Always been a member

ELOISE: Can you tell me a little bit about your parents or why you are here in Sandusky?

CLARA: Well, they were German. They went to a German church, so they had me baptized there. They came from Austria.

ELOISE: What was your maiden name?

CLARA: Clara Binder

ELOISE: Why did they come to Sandusky?

CLARA: I think some of their relatives were here, so that's why I think they came here.

ELOISE: Did your father have a trade?

CLARA: No, he worked in foundries and American Crayon Company.

ELOISE: Where did you live?

CLARA: We lived on Tiffin Avenue when I was born and then when I went to school we lived on Camp Street. We lived there, I don't know how many years and then we moved to Stone Street. I lived there until I got married.

ELOISE: You went to school at St. Mary's?

CLARA: Yes

ELOISE: That was different than it is now?

CLARA: Oh, my goodness, yes. My first grade was in the old church. It was on the corner there and where the high school is now the boys were all in that class. They had us girls upstairs where the Sister's house was. That's where I spent the last years, from the sixth grade on to the eighth grade. I went to the eighth grade. At that time we had instructions if anybody wanted to come after they were out of school on a Sunday afternoon. I went back for four years.

ELOISE: Oh, really

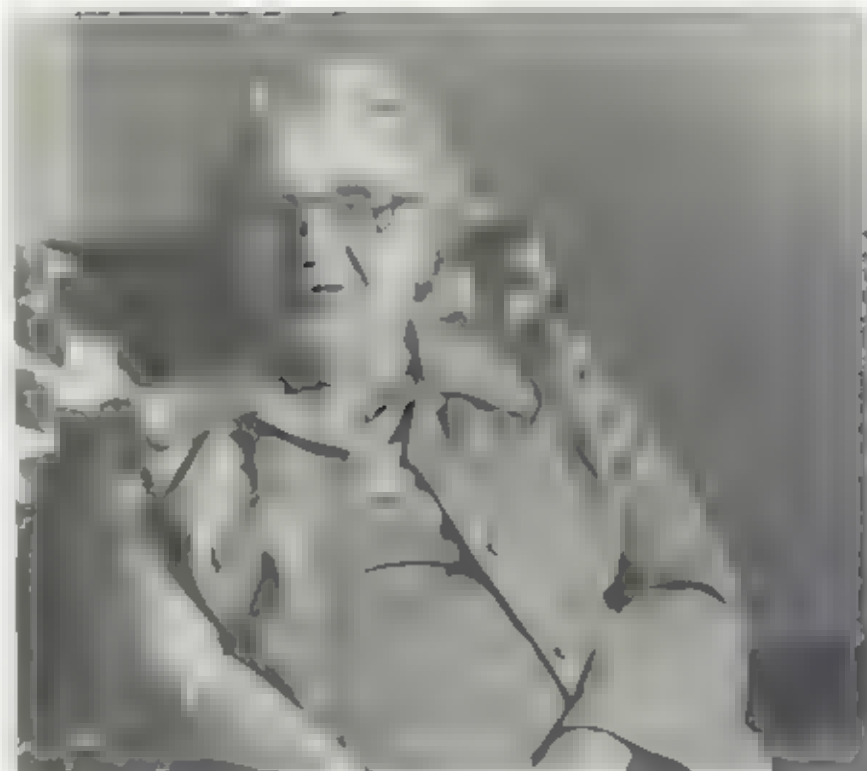
CLARA: Ya, for four years, every Sunday afternoon. We got a gold chain rosary for that. They don't do that anymore now. I think that's part of us older people that sticks with us now, our faith. I think we had a lot of religious things at that time.

ELOISE: That was your whole life and everything centered around the school and the church.

CLARA: We had Mass in the morning, too, like the same as they have now, some of them. I went there and I was married there in 1920.

ELOISE: You had three children, Paul, Charlotte,

CLARA: And Sister Mary Sharon.



ELOISE: I forgot Sister Mary Sharon. She's a Notre Dame nun, isn't she? Where is she?

CLARA: She's in Gesu parish Toledo now. She's 59, she is.

ELOISE: Was she your first child?

CLARA: She was my first child, ya. I had Virginia, she was his child. But I had three of my own.

ELOISE: What has St. Mary's meant to you? How do you feel it has been important in your life?

CLARA: Well, I don't know. Raised there, going there all my life has meant a lot to me.

ELOISE: It was a good strong influence. It helped you many times? You found all the priests good leaders and cooperative and all that?

CLARA: Ya, all the priests we had were wonderful and I can't say anything bad.

ELOISE: Did you find satisfaction? You have been active in like Altar and Rosary.

CLARA: Ya, when I left school I joined the Court of Mary, that was the first one. After we got older, we had the Young Ladies' Sodality. From there we went to the Altar and Rosary Society, so I went through all three of them.

ELOISE: What about those other organizations?

CLARA: Saint Cecelia Auxiliary was one and that still is part of the church. We have only about 20 members. I guess I'm about the oldest member. No, Mrs. Moosburger is the oldest member there.

ELOISE: What's that?

CLARA: Saint Cecelia Auxiliary of the Knights of St. John. They were together.

ELOISE: Oh, the ladies part?

CLARA: Ya.

ELOISE: That was a social group too?

CLARA: We had a drill team Mr. Eschenauer drilled us and we had uniforms. We turned out for many a parade for the church when they had anything

ELOISE: Do you think the church had more activities than they do now for the people?

CLARA: No, I don't. I think they have more activities now

ELOISE: Do you think they are keeping the people as involved as when you were younger?

CLARA: Well, I do, but I do think you have a lot more for young people, yes. You can get acquainted with, that they don't have to go outside to meet people. Younger people should meet people

ELOISE: They should have more social activities?

CLARA: Ya, I think so

ELOISE: How do you feel about the changes; about the growth of the school

CLARA: I think it's very good. I think if they need more room in the school, I think they should have it

ELOISE: How about the changes that have been going on?

CLARA: I would say I like them very well

ELOISE: You are comfortable with them?

CLARA: Ya, I like them very well. I don't think they're so hard to get used to them. We can get used to them. I don't think they're so bad. I like them real well. I like my Mass very much in English than I did in Latin. I didn't understand it in Latin, but I love it in English. I get a lot out of my Mass. I love my Mass

ELOISE: How about the influence now on your children? They all went through St. Mary's; through the schools there?

CLARA: All of them

ELOISE: You feel that they were given a good background in faith?

CLARA: I think so

ELOISE: And that they will pass that heritage on to their own children?

CLARA: They all stayed in their faith and I'm glad of that

ELOISE: Do you think that St. Mary's could do more for the community either socially or faithwise or anything like that?

CLARA: Well, I don't know. I think they are doing good

ELOISE: They always have trouble getting help

CLARA: That's natural, they could use a little more of that

ELOISE: Financial and physical

CLARA: I'm getting too old to do anything like that

More so, I think it's up to the young folks to come and take over

ELOISE: I noticed that at Altar and Rosary there are not too many young people

CLARA: Yea, I don't miss meetings unless I'm sick. I enjoy it very much

ELOISE: Why do you think that the young ones don't go? Do you think they have too many other things to do?

CLARA: Well, I don't know. There are quite a few younger ones that have taken over for the Altar & Rosary Society and I think we had about 50 some that joined last week. That's really growing. It's a very good society, I think

ELOISE: But you think there should be something for the younger people

CLARA: There is nothing much for the younger people. After they get out of the high school where are they going to go? They don't even know

ELOISE: So you think that there should be something for young singles after they are out of the high school?

CLARA: Yes, I think so

ELOISE: There is no place for them to meet, no strong group

CLARA: I don't think we would have so many mixed marriages then either. We would have more you know

ELOISE: You used to have more things with costumes and things. It seems to me when I see pictures of old you had plays and things and went all out

CLARA: I don't remember many plays. All I can remember is when Father Widmann had his name's day, we dressed up in white and I spoke in German

ELOISE: Oh really

CLARA: Yes. That was in the school — in the old school building

ELOISE: Did the priests come over to the schools quite a bit then?

CLARA: They came in those days too

ELOISE: Did you have a bunch of girls you ran around with?

CLARA: We had girls on one side and boys on the other. The first time that the girls and boys went in the class we had to be together, the sister said we shouldn't look at the boys so we had to keep our heads one way. There was one thing I remember

ELOISE: How could you not look?

CLARA: That was terrible

ELOISE: Were you tempted to look?



CLARA: When she answered the door or something we kind of looked over to see who was in the class

I forget what the sisters' names were. I know Sister Prescilia was the last one I had. I think she must be gone. She was in Cleveland. I can't remember all the sisters I had. I think one or two are living yet

ELOISE: Boy, that's really something

CLARA: Guess they're old now. That was from the Cleveland Diocese at that time

ELOISE: Do you have any other feelings about St. Mary's as a church? You know it's their 125th anniversary

CLARA: I can't believe it. I have a nephew that died. He was here, graduated, served Mass; his picture will be back of church. Richard Bender. He went by the name of Bender. We went by the name of Binder. He married, graduated from our school and he was here in September. Anyway it was 40 years. They met every ten years for a class reunion. He was here in June and in September he died, 63 he was. He had four children

ELOISE: That's young

CLARA: I'm so glad he came to see me. They had Mass at the Chapel. From the Chapel they went down to Star Cafe

ELOISE: When you had your children in school, were you as involved? Did they call on the parents to do a lot of things?

CLARA: No, I don't think they did

ELOISE: The kids had to take care of themselves. Did you have to pay tuition for your kids to go?

CLARA: We had to pay for our books. That was all, we didn't pay any tuition. Most of the time we tried to get second hand books from the ones that left the grade. It worked out fine

ELOISE: Do you think money is going to make a difference in educating the children?

CLARA: If they only appreciated it after they sent them through the Catholic school. Oh, I think a lot of cases it's all right. Some children appreciate it. Some don't care

ELOISE: So, you think St. Mary's is strong and will remain a good force

CLARA: Oh, I do, I do

ELOISE: A lot of faithful people

CLARA: There are a lot of good workers too, that help along. Just as I say we older people can't do as much anymore; our days are done now

ELOISE: Who are some of the people I see when I see you at Altar and Rosary. You are always with a group of ladies. Who are they?

CLARA: They are just friends that I met. Mrs. Kromer has a daughter that is a nun. I got acquainted with her. We had club yesterday at her place and just Katherine Hartleb. We were just good friends and we go around together. When we don't have any place to go, we go to Katherine's for supper, play cards together and when it gets to be 9 or 10 o'clock we go home. This Minne McMillan that just died. She was the best friend I ever had. I went with her from the second grade on. She always called me her sister. Then when she moved out to Camp Street, she joined Holy Angels, Father Dendinger's church

ELOISE: So you have had good friends in the church?

CLARA: We all get along good together. When we go to pray the rosary together, the priest comes and says here is the old faithful. We are always the same bunch

ELOISE: That is kind of nice that you can count on that

CLARA: I enjoy the church and wish I could more

# Paul Westerhold

PAUL: Years ago they had more pomp and ceremony then they have today. Lots more. They have more servers up there all of the time. Even after I was out of school, I served Mass. I served Christmas and Easter time

ELOISE: Did they have the high school then?

PAUL: No, they had a two year business course that we went through

ELOISE: Then you went to that. You got out of school early. You were young

PAUL: 1908

ELOISE: How old were you then; about 15 or 16?

PAUL: 16. 1892. Sister Urban conducted that school. She was quite active. In the winter time she would see that half of the school yard was banked up and they would have skating all winter when it got cold enough. She taught business courses, bookkeeping, shorthand and typing. She was there for many years

ELOISE: Where there both men and women then in the school?

PAUL: Both. I remember Genevieve Andres, Erney she was. Louis Andres' wife. She was in the class. Another was Aleda Veek, but she is dead too. And Anita Fox, she became a nun and was in Canada, but she is dead too. I think we had 8 or 10 in our class

ELOISE: Was it different from school today?

PAUL: Oh, my, yes. We went to 8 o'clock Mass everyday. We got out about quarter to four in the afternoon, with an hour off for dinner. We were busy all day. We had a young men's sodality for all the young people and there were different boys in charge each night so they wouldn't get rowdy or anything. The boys would always congregate five nights a week

ELOISE: That was in the old boiler building?

PAUL: Yes, behind the new school. Then we had in the southwest corner of the school building a gym room. We had shower baths in there and all kinds of gymnastic things. We financed that all ourselves. We paid the church rent for the rooms

ELOISE: You had quite a group

PAUL: Funny thing was St. Pete's had nothing and they wanted to join and we finally took them in. One of the fellows was John Tanny. He used to be Probate Judge here at one time. There were just people from St. Mary's, all German

ELOISE: Did you speak the German language?

PAUL: Early in the school, but later on they didn't teach too much German. Then about the fifth grade they started German again. All prayers and confession were in German. On Sunday after-



noons we had to go to instructions in church and at 2:30 we had vespers and benediction. That was every Sunday. St. Mary's was the center of life. Socially and educationally

ELOISE: Did you make your life long friends then?

PAUL: Oh, yes

ELOISE: How do you feel that is compared to what we do now?

PAUL: They run wild now. They were stricter in those days. I think it was good to be strict, a whole lot better. You knew what you had to do and you knew what was going to happen if you didn't

ELOISE: Didn't anyone ever get in trouble?

PAUL: Oh, sure. If a kid got in trouble, the priest would come over and straighten him out. In those days the priest used to come over and visit the school. Maybe about once a week. He would go from one room to another. Every so often we would have examinations and he would come over for examinations

ELOISE: There were all nuns?

PAUL: All nuns, yes. Joe Gerhardstein was the organist and he took us in tow for singing

ELOISE: Did everyone cooperate or were there some strays?

PAUL: No, everyone cooperated

ELOISE: How was money? Was it pretty tight?

PAUL: We didn't have much money. We made our own fun. At our club, we played cards, pool and read books. We did this five nights a week. A lady who lived near came over once a week and



cleaned the club rooms. We paid her so much a week. We always had money on hand. The boys would go out and earn money. This club was called the Young Men's Sodality

ELOISE: Did you ever have parties with the ladies?

PAUL: Oh, yes. Three times a year would be a big dance. We had a banquet sometimes.

ELOISE: Then when you got married you stayed right close to St. Mary's?

PAUL: Yes. We married in 1928

ELOISE: Have you seen many changes in the church building itself?

PAUL: There used to be five altars in that church

ELOISE: Were people generous about helping in the church then?

PAUL: We used to have in the old church before the new school was put up, we had what we called Strawberry Festival. Then later on we had the festivals in the new school. We always had a booth every year, that is, the Young Men's Sodality. We didn't have any trouble getting fellows to work. In those days they took part more than they do today. Everybody didn't want to be boss

ELOISE: Were there lots of other things to do in town?

PAUL: We had picture shows, basketball and we used to hang out with the fellows. The K of C had nothing for young fellows. You had to be 21 to join and 18 for insurance and this was before those ages. Ages 16 to 21 had no place to go. Later on we had to get out of our clubrooms and went back of church, and we had a club there. When we had to get out of there that was the end of the Young Men's Sodality

ELOISE: St. Mary's has been a big part of your life

PAUL: I served Mass there. Ted Westerhold, my cousin, we started together and our brothers were with us at Mass. They were the older servers. We started out with them and we had to learn it in Latin. We had to know it good before we could serve

ELOISE: How do you feel about that change to English?

PAUL: Oh, I think it is better with the English. Latin was hard to understand and to know what was going on

ELOISE: Are you happy with the way things are going now? Do you think the church is still doing a good job?

PAUL: Yes, but I don't like the idea the way they are pushing the Blessed Sacrament around. I can't see that at all

ELOISE: You mean in the hand?

PAUL: No, why they are moving it from the main altar. When you came in church there was the Blessed Sacrament. Now, you have to look around before you find it

ELOISE: Do you like it better with the priest facing you now?

PAUL: Oh, yes, you see more what's going on

ELOISE: Seems the church is more crowded now

PAUL: Church was more crowded at 40 Hours and Thursday nights, also during Lent

ELOISE: Has Sandusky always cooperated with the Catholic Church?

PAUL: Yes, pretty good. We never had much trouble. We always had pretty good city officials. We never had much trouble with city and the church

ELOISE: Is there anything more you would like to say regarding your feelings about the church? Are you proud? Are you glad for it?

PAUL: One thing, since they got more people taking Communion, there is more order now; but they go up to Communion and out they go. I remember when we were servers we were not allowed to touch the chalice or anything like that. There was more respect then

ELOISE: There seems to be more personal relationships. Do you think you could approach a priest better today?

PAUL: I don't know. We were always good friends with the priest. The priests would come down to my house. We were friends with them and as I had a small boat I would ask them to go fishing

ELOISE: How was it when you were raising Pau-ette?

PAUL: She had to behave. She went all through St. Mary's

ELOISE: It was Monsignor Inkrott who came in and made the changes then?

PAUL: Yes

ELOISE: Did they need them?

PAUL: Yes. The benches were bad, the floor was going to pieces. It really needed an overhauling. He had a business head on him

ELOISE: Do you think it is time to remodel again?

PAUL: It needs repainting. I can't see remodeling and changing things around up there. Like taking the communion rail away and things like that. In those days when you came in the center in the entrance to the church, that was open up to the organ. My grandfather donated a couple of the bells up there. The names are on those bells if someone wanted to go up and get that information



**Support  
For The Parish**

It was a beautiful sunny Monday morning, that day after Easter, when I sat in St. Mary's Church. I was alone. The utter stillness, the colored lights streaming through the stained glass windows, the massive columns, the flowered altar of the Resurrection all combined to give me a tremendous feeling of security and love.

I wondered how all this happened. Even in the stillness, I could hear the "Alleluia" being sung by many voices — not only the voices of yesterday's Easter, but all the voices of the many yesterdays. I wondered about those voices. What kind of people did they belong to? What people were here before me? Who were these people that left this legacy that I am now enjoying the fruits of?

The Catholic faith has been a source of belief for many lives and for many lifetimes. I realized that in 125 years since its founding the people of this Church have seen great wars, poverty and disease. Yet through all of this, the people have endured because of their faith and devotion. So in the history of the Church, I began to wonder about the organizations of its' people. These organizations must have been an important and active part of parish life.

There was a large influx of German immigrants to our area between 1841 and 1853 — enough of them to establish their own church in 1873. However, many of these families were poor and did not speak English. Nevertheless, there were common ideals and concerns that united these people and enabled them to achieve their goals.

#### **Knights of St. John**

One of the oldest societies of St. Mary's is the Knights of St. John. On May 22, 1882, a group of men from the parish called a meeting for the purpose of starting a military organization in Sandusky. Thirty men signed the membership roll. The Supreme Commandery issued a charter to St. John's Commandery No. 49, Knights of St. John of Sandusky, Ohio, on July 1, 1882. The first officers were prominent men of the church at that time.

Meetings were held in the old St. Mary's Church until the lodge acquired Fischer's Hall on Decatur Street, across from St. Mary's Church. By 1930, the Commandery had outgrown these quarters and eventually located in the Cooke Building on Columbus Avenue in downtown Sandusky. In 1948 a Home Association was incorporated and the

Knights purchased the former Grace Church Guild House.

The uniformed rank of the Knights of St. John played an important part in the social and solemn festivities of the parish. Membership reached its peak in the early 1900s but after World Wars I and II, interest in the military organizations declined and so did the rolls of the Commandery.

Due to the deaths of several of its active leaders and a smaller membership the Knights decided to sell the lodge building on E. Adams Street. The Commandery still retains its charter and members meet at the home of its president, Ludwig Michel.

#### **St. Cecilia Auxiliary**

In 1900 a group of ladies decided to form an Auxiliary of the Knights of St. John. The late Benjamin Erne was deputy organizer of the Knights at that time and he helped the society get a charter. The Auxiliary above all was a benefit organization which had an insurance fund. The auxiliary has always taken an active part in the social and religious life of the parish and in the 1930s it had a drill team.

#### **Foresters: St. George's Court and St. Mary's Court**

In 1882 a small group of Catholics in Chicago saw the need for mutual protection for themselves and their families — life insurance. They banded together and formed the first court of Forestry.

It was in this same spirit that Frank Link was motivated in the year 1891 to organize the Court of St. George in Sandusky. This was only the second court in the State of Ohio and 40 members were registered.

Link was very active in the parish and his beliefs in the Forestry were so strong that he organized a second court in the parish in 1897 known as St. Mary's Court. It had 67 charter members.

Both of these courts flourished during the years. Meetings were held twice a month in the basement of the school. The lodge room for both is now used as a classroom in the high school.

The members of both of these courts were active in parish activities. Programs of educational and religious appeal were offered as well as recreational outings. Members of each court sponsored their own booths for the fall festivals.

In the fall of 1927 the Foresters held a joint installation for their officers. The courts continued to grow and were active until the late 1950s and early

1960s

Although monthly meetings are no longer held and the courts are not openly active the Court of St. George lists 80 members on its rolls with Carl Kromer serving as financial secretary and Alvin Beverick serving as recording secretary and treasurer. These men have held these positions for the past 30 years.

Also inactive is the Court of St. Mary's Foresters. The roll lists 21 members and Clarence Schwerer has been secretary and John Etowski, treasurer for the past 50 years.

#### **St. Anna Court**

Following the organization of the Foresters, a group of women under Julia Kelly organized a court for the ladies of the parish on March 7, 1898. There were 49 charter members who formed the St. Anna Court.

It was organized for benefit purposes, offering life insurance for all members. The ladies became an active force in parish life. They sponsored many card parties enabling the Catholic people of the area to become acquainted with one another. They also sponsored and worked hard on their booths for the annual parish festival which offered a "hope chest" filled with hand sewn articles and baked goods.

Prior to 1928 the Court met twice a month and though the social aspect of the club was inviting, the women participated in the reception of Easter communion and remembered the sick with prayers and charitable deeds.

#### **The League of the Sacred Heart, The Apostleship of Prayer**

"Behold this Heart!" "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. Learn of Me for I am meek and humble of heart, I am pure and obedient and patient of Heart." This revelation of Our Lord's Sacred Heart almost 300 years ago was appeal for the love of men. This challenge was picked up by a large group of early St. Mary's parishioners in 1883 when the Rev. Nicholas Moes established the League of the Sacred Heart at St. Mary's. Originally founded in France and later known as "the Apostleship of Prayer," 960 members were among the early enrollment of the parish. The cause of the Sacred Heart was kept before the people with the distribution of leaflets on the last Sunday of each month. The League enjoyed its most fruitful times in 1912 when

there were 1,280 members and 96 promoters.

#### **The Sodality of the Blessed Sacrament**

The first hour of public adoration by the Sodality was held in November, 1914. The official papers for the erection of the Sodality were received by the Rev. Joseph Widmann on Jan. 4, 1915.

In the beginning there were 11 different groups that were each assigned a week for public adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. The group retained enough members to continue this practice until the mid 1950s.

#### **St. Mary's Cadets and St. Mary's Marines**

The organization known as St. Mary's Cadets evolved from the boy's sodality of the school. The boys who wanted themselves in the forefront of every movement organized themselves into military cadets in the fall of 1916 with the aid of the Rev. G. N. Habig. The boys learned military tactics under the direction of Charles Gremmelsbacher and John Grathwol, drill masters of the Knights of St. John.

In 1917 with entry into World War I, there was an increase in the ranks of the cadets as well as the formation of rules that were aimed at producing a high standard of manliness and unselfishness.

During the cadets' first appearance they carried American flags and caused a ripple of excitement and admiration in those who saw them. In March, 1917 the cadets received their khaki military uniforms and thereafter wore them regularly when receiving Holy Communion.

Opportunities for public appearances were many and each time the cadets became better known as one of the better drilled junior organizations in the country. They performed an excellent drill in connection with the Silver Jubilee of Father Widmann.

At this time the younger boys in the school were envious of their older friends in the Cadets and they approached Father Habig with a request to form their own organization. Their wishes became a reality when the St. Mary's Marines were formally organized in May, 1917. Steps were taken to get them navy blue uniforms and white sailor hats. Fifty-two boys were enrolled as members and soon they too began to make public appearances.

#### **St. Mary's Girl Cadets**

The girls, filled with military spirit, also expressed a wish to drill. Their wish was granted and once again under the enthusiastic efforts of Charles Gremmelsbacher, a group of 71 of the finest girls of



the parish became the Girl Cadets. The group became one of the best drill teams in the city. They performed in natty white uniforms at many patriotic parades and rallies.

#### **Young Men's Sodality**

In 1902, 32 boys under the guidance of Sister Mary Urban organized the Young Men's Sodality. Initially the group was quite active. It held monthly meetings in a school room, presented several plays and hosted the St. Nicholas Day Festival.

The Sodality continued to flourish at irregular intervals. Much of this depended upon the interest and leadership of St. Mary's associate pastors. In November, 1917, the Y M S. boasted a spacious new club room that was to be open every evening for members to enjoy pinochle and pool.

The young men were also very sports minded and were able to produce a fast paced basketball team, several bowling teams and a baseball team. Although the Sodality enjoyed social entertainment, it also pitched in with its own booth at the annual parish festival and attended monthly Mass and Communion.

During the years after World War I, attendance was down. When the young men returned home, many of them joined other organizations and with the advent of the automobile, they found other forms of activity. The Sodality quietly ended in the late 1920s.

#### **Y.M.S. Band**

With the love of music as a common bond, about 15 young men organized the Y M S. Band in the winter of 1914. They rehearsed every Friday in the school and created a spirit of harmony and friendship among themselves.

The band performed at many parish functions, patriotic assemblies and formed a colorful escort for Bishop Samuel A. Stritch on his Confirmation tour of Kelley's Island.

In existence for just four years, the members were forced to disband when recruiting new members proved difficult in 1918.

#### **The Court of Mary**

Prior to 1927 children did not make their solemn Communion until the age of 12. As soon as a girl made her first communion, she was enrolled in the Court of Mary. The seventh and eighth grade girls belonged to the junior group and the senior unit was comprised of the older girls. Monthly meetings were

held to stimulate interest and the highlights of the year were the St. Nicholas Festival, the Christmas and Easter parties and the annual picnic. They also received Communion as a group once a month.

#### **Young Ladies Sodality**

At the age of 16, the girls enrolled in the Young Ladies Sodality which stressed a spirit of union, strength and friendship among the young ladies of the parish. Their meetings, which were held on the second Monday of the month, were business meetings combined with social hours and refreshments.

The Young Ladies Sodality was founded in May, 1873 by the Rev. Nicholas Moes and was an active and energetic group until the mid 1940s. Its presence was felt annually during the fall festival and the proceeds from its lawn fetes were given to the church and the school for such things as the statue of the Immaculate Conception for the side altar and a donation of 60 books for the school library.

The young women also enjoyed an annual outing and banquet. These two events were shared with the Young Men's Sodality beginning in 1918.

#### **The Ephepheta Auxiliary**

"What you do to the least of my brethren, you do to me." With these words of Christ, the Ephepheta Auxiliary was organized. The chief aim of this society is to promote the temporal and spiritual welfare of Catholic deaf-mutes.

Beginning with only 20 members, men and women, the society grew quickly to 100 and held meetings twice a month. Special services were held and the sermon was given in sign language. With the help of the hearing brethren, social evenings and picnics were planned.

This organization is still active in the Toledo diocese, but has not been functioning in St. Mary's since the 1960s. One of the last supporters, who still remains in touch with a group from Toledo, is Helen Bickley.

#### **Propagation of the Faith**

The society for the Propagation of the Faith was organized at St. Mary's in February, 1925. the Rev. Herman Gabel addressed the members of the parish and stressed the need for financial support of the missions.

At the inauguration of the drive the parish had 17 promoters who collected the dues from parishioners and worked to enroll new members. It was the leading parish in the diocese during the 1920s.

The parish still supports the organization. Although it has been a number of years since it had promoters, each year a representative from the Propagation of the Faith is welcomed at weekend Masses. Membership is still in four classifications and the parishioners have always responded to the missionaries' appeal. It is also to this cause that money earned and saved during Lent by the grade school children is donated.

#### **Holy Name Society**

The Holy Name Society was established in St. Mary's shortly after World War I, but it dates back to 1274 when the Council of Lyons decreed that reparation should be made to the Holy Name of Jesus for insults made to it. The main objectives of the society are devotion of the Holy Name of Jesus and to aid in the combat of evils that challenge the Church.

The Holy Name continued to grow throughout the years and in 1955 it had a membership of 250 men. It met once a month and members received Communion in a body. As with many of the other parish organizations, it helped with the fall festival.

Today, all the men of the parish are considered members. Not quite as active as in the last decade, the men collect annual dues and meet in February. Each spring they sponsor a fathers' and sons' Communion Sunday and breakfast. Part of the yearly dues is used for subscriptions to the Catholic Chronicle for the local libraries, and Sandusky, EHOVE, Perkins and Margaretta high schools.

#### **St. Vincent de Paul Society**

"The poor we have with us always." It is also true that there have always been groups of parishioners who have given their time and efforts to help the poor.

In 1929 Alfred Kiffer came to Sandusky from Pittsburgh to take over the position of organist at St. Mary's. About the same time a depression hit the country and Kiffer and several parishioners decided to form a St. Vincent de Paul Society. The society gets its name from St. Vincent who was called the Apostle of Organized Charity who cared for the sick and aged in Paris during the 17th century. Members of the Society gave many hours of their time soliciting food and money to help the needy.

After the depression conditions improved and the work of the Society changed. In the 1940s it be-

came less active.

In October, 1958, the Rev. Joseph Inkrott, the pastor, asked the group of Holy Name men to reorganize the Society. William Wagner was elected president and the Society once again became active in helping the poor, visiting the sick and taking charge of the annual Bishop's Clothing Drive.

When Wagner left Sandusky in 1964, Martin Hippler took over as president and served until his death in February, 1966. Thomas J. Cucaro was the next president and he was an active leader of the organization. It was during this time that members of the Society took the choir boys to visit the nursing homes and shut-ins. This was a seasonal highlight for the parish members. Cucaro served the organization until his death in October, 1977.

The group is smaller today, but membership is open to both men and women who are interested in performing works of charity. The present officers are Robert Hemminger, president, and Arthur Moosburgger, secretary-treasurer. Under their leadership the group still provides emergency help for needy families and it supplies subscriptions of the Catholic Chronicle to the Ohio Veterans Home.

#### **Christian Mothers and Altar Society**

Who are we? How did we originate and gradually evolve from a simple parochial organization to a very complex and current organization? Actually there were two distinct groups, The Sodality of Christian Mothers and the Altar Society. The exact date of their merger is not clear.

Our original church was completed in the fall, 1855. There were some women who were involved in caring for the altars and linens and vestments at that time. However, there was no formal organization. Our parish continued to grow in numbers. The typical woman of this period was of German ancestry, married with children. Her husband worked six 12-hour days. Her life revolved around her children, her home and the church.

As the population shifted from agriculture to industry, the woman felt perplexed about the changes made in her life. Some of her children were in school, speaking and reading English and becoming more Americanized. She felt the decade of the "Gay Nineties" with its relaxed moral code threatening her way of life.

The only constant force was the Church. Her pastor spoke German, so she felt she could speak



to him openly and she felt understood. Perhaps her pastor was hearing the same story from many mothers. How could he help them? Possibly by uniting them

He had heard of a society started in France in 1850 which was introduced into the United States in 1875. Its purpose was to enlist mothers in counteracting infidelity and immorality among youth. So it came to be in 1891 a branch of Christian Mothers was established at St. Mary's by the Rev. J. Heidegger. Membership was open to all mothers who were properly registered in the parish, but there were no meetings or ceremonies. The mothers were placed under the protection of Mary, the Mother of Sorrows

It may be that Father Heidegger effected a union of the two groups. It took our present church 25 years to be completed. Somehow the Altar Society raised money to pay for the stained glass window at the rear of the church on St. Joseph's side

When the Rev. Joseph S. Widmann became pastor he acted as spiritual director of the groups. It was during this time that women were hired to clean the church and launder and repair altar linens and vestments. Money was needed for this purpose so dues were assessed each member and solicitors visited the members yearly to collect the dues. There were still no meetings, but the 7:00 Mass on the second Sunday of each month was offered for the intention of the members. All dues and expenditures were handled by the recording secretary who was Amelia Ritzenhaler. She remained in the position for approximately 25 years

The Christian Mother and Altar Society continued to function rather haphazardly until 1943 when the Rev. William C. Zierolf appointed Freda Singler president, Amelia Link vice president, Amelia Ritzenhaler treasurer, and Colet Shepherd secretary. A constitution and by-laws were drawn up and the group began meeting quarterly. It was during this period that the name became St. Mary's Altar and Rosary Society. The society helped with the fall festival, card parties, mending church linens, saying the rosary at funeral homes and sending representatives to the funerals of members

The constitution was revised in 1954. Today the organization is a united front of women with 400 members. Truth, goodness, beauty are words that symbolize the history of the organization

But we are not standing still! There are still beautiful religious ceremonies, vital current discussions at meetings, caring for those who are not as fortunate as we are; aiding our school in every way possible, and community involvements. We are a progressive organization

### **Conclusion**

Reflecting on all that has preceded us may seem overwhelming! As we can see some of the organizations are still in existence while others have disbanded. But we have had an excellent foundation. The story of our organizations has been a story of our people

We are vital! We are caring! We are industrious! We are not content to sit and rest on past accomplishments! We are eager to move forward as the next chapter of our history is beginning. May God continue to bless us and our efforts

— Margie Cucaro Morris



**The Wonders  
Of  
Our Church**

St. Mary's Parish has a long and varied architectural history. One of the special attributes of St. Mary's is that the parishioners, pastors and builders have nearly always chosen native Sandusky blue limestone with which to build, whether through economic prudence, local loyalty, availability of parish stonemasons or merely by accident. But because the abundant use of native limestone is a hallmark of our city's architectural heritage in general, St. Mary's has also been marked by this unique Sandusky characteristic. Stone lends itself to grandiose monuments (such as our 1880 church building) and enhances its grandeur, so for whatever the reasons, the choice of native stone was a wise one.

But long before the first stone was laid for our present church, the dedicated parishioners had sacrificed their meager means to build other fine buildings, some of which no longer remain.

The first building built by St. Mary's parish was the original stone church on the corner of Decatur



and Jefferson streets. It was constructed in 1855. A beautiful little Gothic building, it served the parish well for many years, continuing as a church where daily mass was offered even after the present church was built. As the enrollment grew at the school, this church was turned into classrooms (1894) and served as a school and later parish hall until 1909 when the present high school was built.

By 1920 the old church had been torn down.

One of the oldest standing buildings in our architectural lineage is the present sisters' house, originally the girls' school, built in 1887 of Sandusky limestone. The boys continued to be taught in the old school (1862) that was torn down in 1909 to build the present high school. The original part of the sisters' house is a simple, sturdy serviceable building with an interesting central tower and stone lintels and sills. It was converted to a convent around 1909. An addition in the early 1950s made the building more comfortable for living.

The rectory was built in 1893 of Sandusky limestone with sandstone accents. Notable exterior features include the round tower (a detail of Queen Anne style architecture), an ornamental limestone



band on the tower, roof returns on the sides, arched Gothic windows, a sandstone porch and the molded cornice detail. George Feick, Sr., was the builder. The addition was built in 1955.

The present St. Mary's Central Catholic High School, built in 1909, was originally the grade school. It too was constructed of Sandusky blue limestone, backed up with stone that was quarried on the site. The trim is terra cotta. It is in the Gothic style with a battlement roof. The builder was proud to construct one of the first buildings in the area with a flat roof. It was also built to be entirely fireproof. This building was enlarged in 1952 while the Rev. Joseph Hartmann was principal. The science building behind the high school with six additional classrooms was built in 1972. The windows over the main entrance to the high school are English style leaded glass with the following symbols: a dove and olive



branch representing peace; a scroll, wisdom; an anchor, hope; a cross, faith; a lamp and book education, and a lyre, music

St. Mary's elementary school is a functional brick building dedicated in 1957

But the greatest architectural treasure in our midst today is the parish church, which was officially recognized as a treasure by being accepted for listing in The National Register of Historic Places in 1975. Being on the Nation Register indicates that professionals in the fields of architecture and history officially recognize the value of the building

To improve our appreciation for a lovely building we use daily or weekly but sometimes hardly notice let's take a trip around and through St. Mary's Church to notice some of the features there from 1880 and some of the interior remodeling of the 1890s, 1930s, 1950s, 1960s and 1970s which are also part of our heritage from the past

Standing outside, let your eyes travel up the front of the building to the statue of Mary, Our Lady of Sorrows, the patron of our parish. Isn't she resplendent there in 24 carat gold leaf? She is flanked by two Gothic windows with a three-fold Gothic arch tying the grouping together. Directly below the statue and over the main entrance is the pierced heart of the Blessed Virgin, emblem of the Mother of Sorrows, carved in sandstone

Going around to the south side of the church notice the eight projecting stone braces (buttresses) with Bearea sandstone cape. Notice all the other sandstone accents on the Sandusky blue





limestone

The tower, which is 200 feet high, and the smaller spire are covered in copper. As your eyes travel up the spires, can you imagine the pride and the awe with which the German immigrants were filled as they completed this monument of thanksgiving to the Lord? Notice, too, the delicate cast iron creating the crosses of the roof

The church is shaped like a cross, or cruciform. The smaller spire is placed at the crossing of the nave and the transepts, or arms of the cross. This is

a typical element of the Gothic style

The precise architectural style of the church is Middle or Decorated Gothic in which the decoration is not so pronounced as in later Gothic. The main entrance to the church is very plain, compared to entrances of later Gothic period churches, such as many of the famous churches in Europe

Entering the front door probably the first item to come to your attention will be the beautiful windows behind the altars. In the medieval church, on which St. Mary's was modeled, symbolism was abundant



to instruct the people, most of whom did not read or write. Seeing the saints depicted in the beautiful windows called to mind their lives and the examples they set. Pictured in St. Mary's windows are the following saints; St. John, St. Joseph, St. Anne, St. Joachim, St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Mary, St. Scholastica and St. Augustine. How many can you identify? Can you remember which sister or priest told you about each saint? Just when the windows were added to the church is not clear. The windows behind the altar appear to be plain glass in the 1905 interior photograph of the church.

The paintings of the Resurrection and the Annunciation above St. Joseph's and the Blessed Mother's altars respectively are believed to have been painted early in the life of the building, prior to the 1930 renovation.



*Interior of Church. 1905*

There is probably not one child in St. Mary's who has ever sat near the front of the church who hasn't seen the Eye of God on the ceiling above the altar. While you're looking there, notice the three dimensional dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit, that was moved there from over the original pulpit. The original pulpit was built around the front column on the north side, as can be seen in both the 1905 and the 1930 pictures of the church interior.

At the top of that column (the capital, in architectural language) can you see the man's face and the ugly head both carved there? Can you imagine the delight of the stone carver to leave us this special message? Which do you suppose represents the pastor's head and which the stone carver's?

Each of the 10 columns has a slightly different capital, attesting to the variety of talent of long ago.



*Interior of Church 1931*

stone carvers who in the late 1880s left us this beautiful letter carved in the stone of the capitals. The variety and impishness in carving was a trait of medieval carvers imitated in the 19th century by our own craftsmen.

Since the ceiling above the side aisles is nearly as high as the ceiling above the center aisle, the part above the center aisle higher than the side aisles, called the clerestory, is very shallow. But there is room there for identical clerestory windows, near the ceiling. When you return outside again, be sure to notice these on the roof.

The 10 large freestanding stone columns support the interlacing arches (groining) overhead. The shallow clerestory makes it possible for the six large high windows in each side wall to give general lighting. The glass in the windows is not colored glass

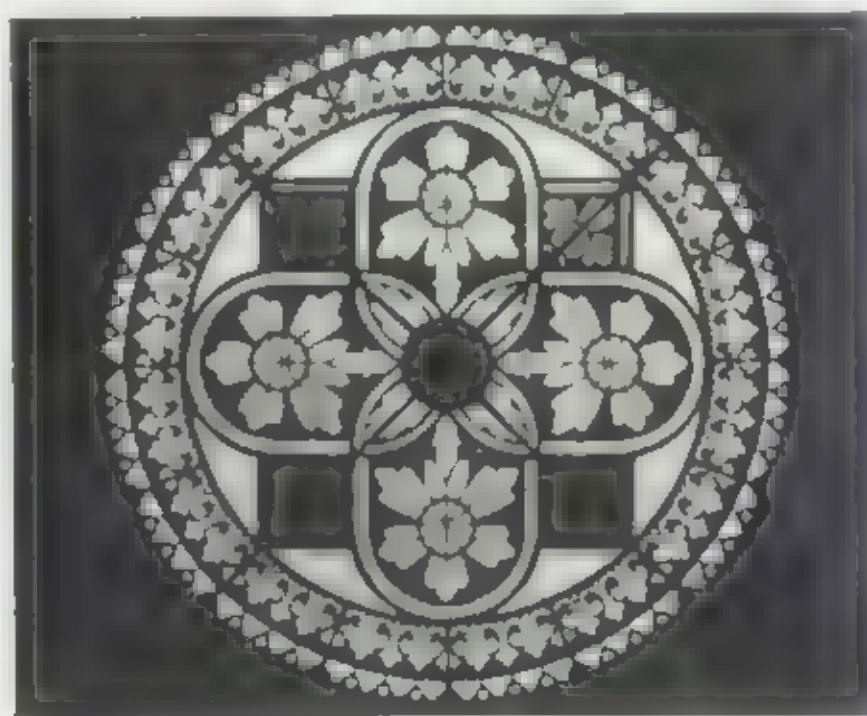


often called stained glass, but it is a type in which the colors and designs were painted on and then fired, a type commonly used in Victorian churches of that period. Notice too, the much larger windows in the transepts.

According to the architect who described the church in the anniversary book of 1930, "The idea was that the general proportions of the building, its

construction, and its material would be interesting in themselves; that it is not necessary to adorn its construction by covering with mosaics or marble veneer." How right those original builders were. George Feick, Sr., was the builder who finished the superstructure of the church. Although the cornerstone was laid in October, 1873, the financial panic of "Black Friday" delayed the construction so the church was not finished until the fall of 1880. The boiler house built from the church also housed a classroom for the grade school for a time.

Glancing through the historic pictures of the church interior, it's obvious changes have been made through the years. Twelve years after the church was built, two altars were added in front of



the central pilasters, and the Crucifixion group was added above the main altar. Notice that when these two altars were removed sometime before 1930, the statues from them, the Sacred Heart and Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, were given places of honor on the south and north walls near the side altars.

In 1898 \$11,000 worth of renovations, including a \$5,000 organ, were made and two years later more changes came.

In 1929 the G. A. Boeckling Memorial Organ was dedicated. This organ was made up of pipes from an old theatre organ and a newly constructed console. It was made possible by a donation from G. A. Boeckling, founder of Cedar Point. This is the same organ in use today.





In 1930 the church was renovated and redecorated and new lighting and heating were installed.

The most striking aspect of the 1930 renovation was the replacing of the old altar with the altar which remains today. The Gothic decoration and many statues were removed from the side altars and new central spires were added so that they match the new main altar. The pews and the



confessionals were also replaced and the decorative painting on the ceiling above the altars and on the ground was added. The pulpit was taken down from the front column and the present pulpit with the eagle, the symbol of the Gospel of St. John, which carries us to heaven, that was installed.

Not only the symbols of the Gospels of the four evangelists in the apse above the main altar, the



human head for St. Matthew whose Gospel begins with the human ancestry of Jesus, the hermit dweller of the desert, for St. Mark whose Gospel begins with John the Baptist in the wilderness, the saint who died for St. Luke whose Gospel begins with the birth of the priest Zachary, and the eagle for St. John, mentioned earlier. All the way around the back ground for the crucifix are the 12 symbols for the 12 apostles. More symbols are found in the communion rail which also was installed in 1964. Other renovations then included remodeling of the balcony, addition of the padded doors from the vestibules into the nave and the installation of a baptismal font in the entryway added off the sacristy. The paintings of the Presentation in the Temple and the Crucifixion over the side doors and the paintings of the Stations of the Cross were added at this time too.

The addition of the altar, the pulpit, the

lectern, the lateral altars, the choir altar and the presbytery, the choir and the presbytery are the three most recent renovations made during the 1960s and early 1970s. A different emphasis in the 1970s, an emphasis on the community celebrating together around the Eucharistic table, prompted these changes. Also during this time an original marble holy water font was reconstructed from pieces found in the church basement by an artist in the high school, directed by Donald Nath. The font served as a baptismal font since the rite of baptism is now more commonly celebrated inside the church at a mass or prayer service. Hymn boards came into use during this period also, as the singing of the community became increasingly important.

And so we reach 1980, 125 years of history of a parish, 100 years of history of a building. Just as the parish grew and changed, so the





parish and its buildings have grown and changed  
and adapted to serve the people who serve their  
Lord

Anni Dassel Rose Nath

The symbol is around the background for the cross, with the main altar stand for the 12 apostles and for the 12

Crossed keys — St Peter

Three sheaves — St John the Evangelist

Cup with serpent — St John

X shaped cross — St Andrew

Cross with two keys — St Peter

Three knives — St Bartholomew

Carpenter's square with — St Thomas

Saw — St James the Apostle

Three nails — St Matthew

St John the Evangelist

Fish on a cross — St Simon

Open book with double edged cross — St Matthias

The symbol is in the Communion rail, represent the 12 days of Jesus' life from the Last Supper to the Resurrection. They are

Cross over cup, cross and money bag, Whip, cross, cross, ladder and nail and Empty cross

**The Heart  
Of Our  
Parish**



### Pastors of St. Mary's

Rev. Felix M. Egan  
Rev. T. F. Wicks, S.B.  
Rev. James Harpelle  
Rev. John Harpelle, S.J.  
Rev. Nicholas R. J. P.  
Rev. John Baptist P. J. P.  
Rev. J. P. J.  
Rev. J. P. J.  
Rev. A. Herndt  
Rev. V. L. H. H. H.  
Rev. H. L. J. M. H.  
Rev. J. H. H. H.  
Rev. S. R. H. H.  
Rev. Joseph F. W. H. H.  
Rt. Rev. Major W. H. C. H. H.  
Rt. Rev. Major Joseph H. H. H.  
Rt. Rev. Major Albert C. H. H.  
Rev. J. H. C. H. H.  
Rev. Robert W. H. H.

# Clergy

Many Church historians attribute the success of spiritual renewal, financial stability and apostolic assistance of the American Catholic Church to the personality and guidance of its leaders. There is certainly no exception to this statement in regard to the clergy, past and present, of St. Mary's Parish.

We as a growing Christian community can understand the pains of maturity; depicted by the rise and decline of our congregation, the increase of the population upon economy and the struggle to alert ourselves that God is present in our lives, in good times as well as in bad. As our ancestors immigrated to America the establishment of Catholicism was one tradition gaining root; and to our advantage, Sandusky became a segment of universal expansion.

The pastors and associates, those who built our

house of worship, those who administered the sacraments so that we might believe, those who continually assured us of God's eternal love have proven that dedication and commitment to the holy priesthood is much alive in our maturing parish.

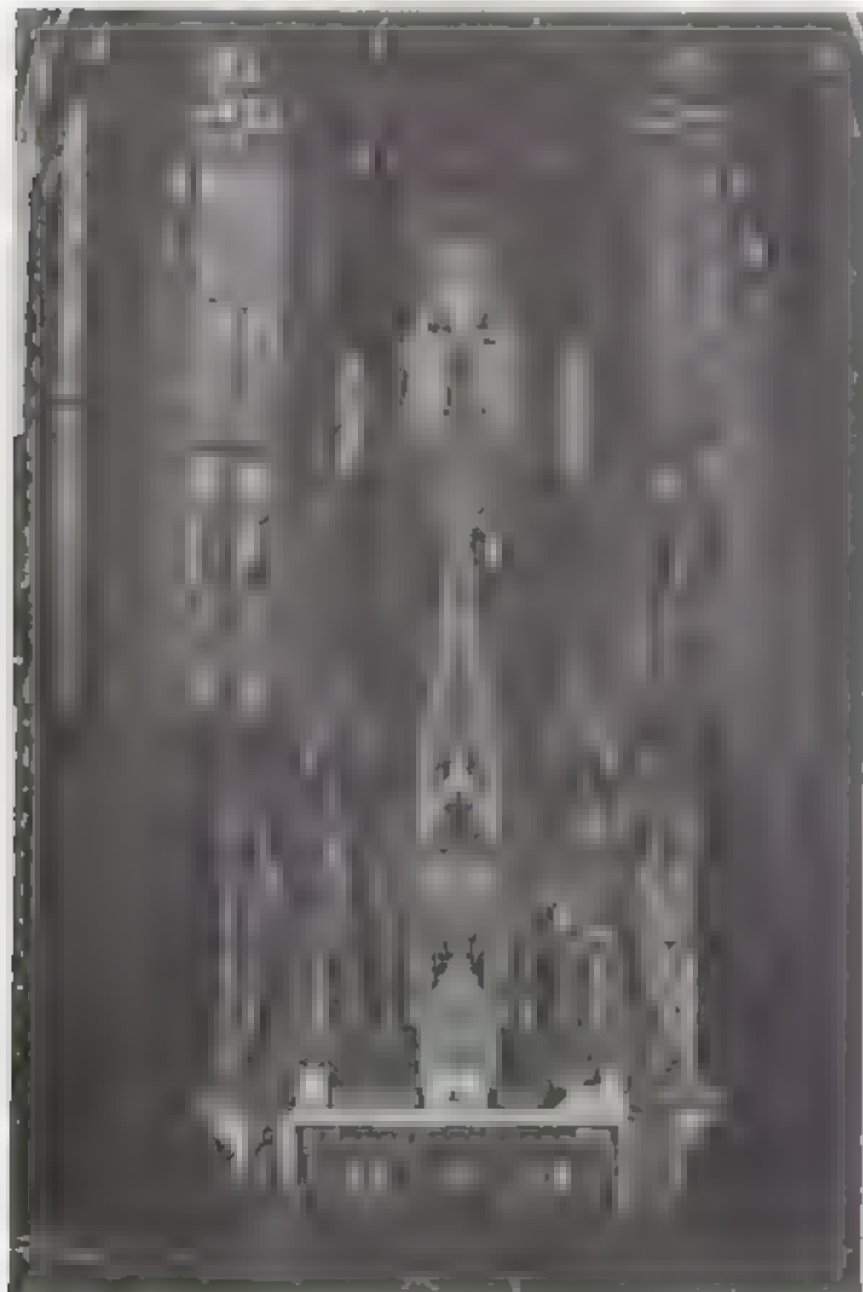
What we have gained as St. Mary's Parish is not only the beauty of our exterior landscape or church, but people who have responded positively to its leaders. It would be unfortunate for us if we had no article submitted in this book concerning our past and present leaders. The following accounts deal with those who "tended the flock for the Lord", and for St. Mary's Parish.

The first resident pastor of St. Mary's begins with the Rev. Felix M. Boff, quasi-pastor (protem) for five months in 1853. Upon his transfer to St. Mary's, he was ordained to the diaconate, but because of the urgent need of help and the scarcity of German-speaking priests, his course of studies was interrupted for a time, and he was sent to render assistance to Father Conlan of Holy Angels Parish, as well as to administer to the tide of German immigrants arriving and settling in Sandusky.

Deacon Boff was soon replaced by the first official pastor of the new parish, Rev. J. T. Dolwek, O.S.B., labored here from December, 1853, to April, 1855. He came as a diocesan seminarian from Metz, Lorraine, to the United States. Upon completion of his seminary studies at St. Mary's Seminary in Cleveland, and ordination to the priesthood, December 11, 1853, he was appointed pastor of St. Mary's. Father Dolwek was not sent far from St. Mary's as his transfer took place in 1855. He labored successfully in the parishes of Peru, Norwalk, Berwick and Liverpool. He left the diocesan priesthood in 1864 to become a Benedictine monk, and was later chosen Prior of the Benedictines, St. Michael's Monastery, Chicago, Illinois.

Rev. James Harmene, successor to Father Dolwek, provided St. Mary's with an ambitious outlook for the future. A native of Metz, just as his predecessor, Father Harmene was adopted for service to the diocese of Cleveland. Due to the fact that the diocese of Toledo was not established until 1910, service to our Sandusky area was provided by the Cleveland clergy. Father Harmene was ordained December 11, 1853, and appointed pastor of St. Alphonsus Parish, Peru, in 1854 with St. Mary's Parish, Norwalk, as a mission. The following year

Main Altar, 1955





he was sent to the then young and poor parish of St. Mary's, Sandusky. Ambitious enough, Father Harmene, with the aid of Messrs. N. J. Buyer, H. Lutz, B. Icsman, B. Schenk, J. Wernert, M. Ott, L. Cable and G. Homegardner, purchase two lots on Jefferson and Decatur Streets for \$1,900. He commended the small church structure, and although not finished in the fall of 1855, the first mission was given by Reverend Weninger. If one were to acclaim the administration of Father Harmene in a light of

success, the first pastoral residence, or parsonage, and construction of a framed school would highlight his endeavors while pastor of St. Mary's. Later sites of his ambitious ministry can be found in the cities of Cleveland, Maumee and Massillon. He returned to France in 1867 where he was engaged in parochial work until his death, April 14, 1886. He lies buried in his homeland, in the village of Chemery.

The pastorates following the accomplishments of Father Harmene were very brief. Although in com-



mand for a short time, four years to be exact, the Reverends Harkspeil, Moes (first pastorate), Roupp, Uhlmann, Donebt and Valet contributed much to the growth of St. Mary's physically, as well as spiritually.

Father A. Herbstritt, at one time a member of the Congregation of the Most Precious Blood, was born in Fuehrenthal, Baden, September 15, 1823, and immigrated to the United States in July 1844. Having done pastoral ministry in the towns of Avon, New Riegel, Glandorf and Wapakoneta, he was accepted as a diocesan priest in 1865. To the assistance of our congregation, he was sent to guide St. Mary's. A man of true practicality and foresight, he purchased six lots on Central Avenue and Jefferson Street for \$6,625, which was to be the new site for the Church and Rectory. Leaving St. Mary's in 1868, Father Herbstritt was sent to Randolph, and in the following year he left the Cleveland diocese to attend service in the Detroit Diocese. He died in Wyandotte, Mich., Sept. 3, 1880.

Father Victor Haussner, a Swiss by birth and Sanguinist Father like his predecessor, Father Herbstritt, was pastor at St. Mary's but a short time. Due to an illness that prevented his pastoral duties, he died April 28, 1881, at Charity Hospital, Cleveland. Just as the previous pastorates were short, his contribution added to the growth of a community of believers.

If one were to attribute the guidance of our present home of worship to completion, the direction would be coming from Father Nicholas Moes. Plans for the new church were drawn and the foundation completed in the fall of 1873, at which a celebration of laying the cornerstone was presided by Bishop Gilmour. However, the panic of "Black Friday" dashed aside any hopes that might have been established for total completion of the church. With the return of financial stability and continuation of faithful prayers, construction was resumed.

At this time, the congregation numbered four hundred, over a third of whom were extremely poor. The church was nevertheless constructed as the parishioners were able to pay. Seven years after the cornerstone ceremony, the church was completed and dedicated November 28th, 1880, by Bishop Gilmour to "The Mother of Sorrows". The edifice cost \$80,000, and when completed, there was only \$10,000 outstanding.

Another building project was undertaken by Father Moes. A school building of stone construction was erected on Decatur Street at a cost of \$5,000. The new building contained four classrooms and modern equipment. Today, this structure still stands, but as the convent of our Sisters of Notre Dame. The old frame church, which stood on the corner of Jefferson and Decatur streets was repaired and services during the week were held in it. In 1893 plans were made to convert the structure into school rooms, which were carried out in 1894.

Father Moes resigned as pastor of St. Mary's in 1888 to return to his native home of Luxemburg. He passed into eternal life November 26, 1900. He was regarded by many as a great preacher, instructor, builder and financier. As worker he was vigorous.



and fearless. St. Mary's Church will ever stand as a memorial to his pastorate, and to the boast he made of furnishing one of the finest churches in the diocese

In 1891, Father J. Heidegger, the next pastor succeeding Father Moes erected a boiler house at a cost of \$4,000. He introduced the Christian Mothers and Altar Society with a large membership of four hundred. He commenced the erection of the parochial residence which was to consist of three stories, containing twenty rooms and estimated cost of \$12,000. Although the plans for the parsonage seemed major, Father Heidegger successfully installed two additional altars in the church (1892) and the Crucifixion group. Before the work (which was to have cost \$2,000.) was completed, he was succeeded by Reverend S. Rebholz

Father S. Rebholz assumed charge of St. Mary's on Easter Sunday, April 2, 1893. He exhibited an unusual amount of activity as may be seen from the summary of his work. During his pastorate, the unfinished work of his predecessor which included the parsonage, altars, ornamental fretwork and Crucifixion group were completed. In 1893, Ladies of the Sacred Heart of Mary, who educated the children in the school, were withdrawn from charge of St. Mary's and replaced by the Sisters of Notre Dame, Cleveland, in September of the same year. The following year, he converted the old church into two additional school rooms at a cost of \$2,000. The school enrollment at this time was six hundred

On September 18, 1898, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the new church was celebrated. For the occasion, the entire interior of the church was renovated. The old candelabras, which were arranged for gas lighting were changed into a combination of gas and electric lights. New additional lights were placed throughout the sanctuary and nave, and two years later, it was the boast of the parish that the 1,100 lights gave one of the most brilliant illuminated churches in the country. A new organ was installed, costing \$5,000. An organ concert was held in September of the same year under Professor Eugene Bonn of Rochester, N. Y., assisted by a chorus of sixty voices. The total improvements for the renovation amounted to \$11,000. The debt was paid in two years, together with all current expenses, by a subscription which he initiated throughout the parish community

When celebrating the silver jubilee at Link's Hall, Father Rebholz was affectionately styled "the most congenial of beggars." He labored well in the service of God, and for the people of St. Mary's. The irony of his lifetime comes eight years after his arrival to St. Mary's on Easter Sunday, when he died on April 7, 1901. Although he left a community of strong believers in an earthly life, he rests in St. Mary's cemetery amidst the many he prepared for eternity

"Good Father Joseph S. Widmann", as he was affectionately called and still remembered, was a man of rare and solid common sense. A bighearted and tireless worker, as well as a sane and safe instructor, he was never spectacular, but always calm and humble — "wise as the serpent and simple as the dove" Truly, he was one of nature's noblemen

Many are the works of Father Widmann, but the greatest of them all, the building program of our present high school facility, will stand as a monument to his greatness. With only \$20,000 available, he began the road to constructing the new school. While the new building was in progress to completion, it was necessary to furnish additional classroom facilities. The boiler house, with its two lavatories in the basement and one story consisting of classrooms, was contracted with Anton Schaefer for \$5,095 in August of 1908

The expenses of the new school with final equipment, estimated to cost \$85,000 originally, mounted to the sum of \$113,400. The unforeseen cost of the structure was raised, due to the renovation of the girls school for the Sisters convent, which cost another \$6,000

During the next eight years of Father Widmann's pastorate, the parishioners paid off \$20,000 leaving a remaining debt of \$80,000. The good fruit of Father Widmann's work will continue to multiply and be enjoyed by generations after generation

Father William C. Zierolf was born October 17, 1873, in New Bavaria, Henry County, Ohio. His pious and thrifty parents had forsaken the city life of Boston for the delights of the country. Graduating from the district school, he attended St. Ignatius College in Cleveland and two years later, became a resident student at St. Canisius College, Buffalo, N. Y. Finishing his college career in 1901, he bade farewell to Canisius and his Jesuit teachers. In the





fall of 1901, Fr. Zierolf continued his studies toward the priesthood with the Sulpician Fathers at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, Md. Upon completion of his seminary studies, he was ordained to the sacred ministry by the renowned Cardinal Gibbons at the Cathedral of Baltimore, December 22, 1905.

Twelve years after his assignment in the Canton area, Fr. Zierolf was appointed pastor of St. Mary's and celebrated his first liturgy on Christmas Day 1918. Although a pastorate was considered an honorable step in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, Fr. Zierolf was elevated to the order of Domestic Prelate in August of 1938.

Msgr. Zierolf was very successful in the administration of the parish. Some of his accomplishments include disintegrating the remaining debt of \$80,000 on the school, acquiring the site and building the rectory garage for clergy vehicles; modernization of the parish rectory (or parsonage); renovation of the church interior; together with the installation of the most perfect lighting and heating; installation of the G. A. Boeckling memorial organ; enlargement of the elementary and high school, and

the purchase of the 60 acres to be developed into what is now Calvary Cemetery. Devoted to the growth of St. Mary's High School in a special way, he enlarged the Sisters' convent to accommodate the religion teachers, constructed the new auditorium/gym, and founded the St. Mary's High School Paper, "The Bell."

Unlike many pastors of his time, Msgr. Zierolf was fortunate to celebrate a triple Jubilee event in 1930: (1) the Diamond Jubilee of the parish, (2) the Golden Jubilee of the present church structure, (3) the Silver Jubilee of his priestly ministry.

Msgr. Zierolf was unable to see the parish growth into the 1950's when he died in September 16, 1953, at the age of 80. He will be long remembered in the minds of St. Mary's parishioners not only for his wonderful achievements, but especially for his fatherly solicitude of the souls entrusted to his care.

Father Joseph H. Inkrott was born in Ottawa, Ohio, September 14, 1903. Graduating from the district school, he studied at St. Joseph's College, Collegeville, Ind. He attended St. Gregory Seminary, Cincinnati, then to Mount St. Mary's School of Theology, Norwood, Ohio, and was ordained to the priesthood June 11, 1927.

After his various assignments as associate pastor of St. Joseph's, Tiffin, and St. Peter's, Mansfield, he became pastor of Mother Of Sorrows, North Auburn, and St. James, Toledo. He was appointed pastor of St. Mary's, Sandusky on October 14, 1953. Like his predecessor, Father Inkrott was elevated to Domestic Prelate by Pope Paul VI on November 14, 1963. Before this time, however, many activities had occurred in the parish concerning renovation and new building projects.

By 1954, plans were formulated for renovation and enlargement of St. Mary's Rectory. In addition to this, construction was underway to build an annex connecting the rectory and church. This addition would contain several living quarters, a choral instruction room and lavatories. A new powerhouse, which replaced the previous 60 year old structure, was constructed. This enabled the church to have a new baptistry and entry way to the north transept of the structure; and additional parking space was provided for the use of parishioners.

On June 15, 1955, a Centennial celebration was held. Nineteen Monsignori, together with 130 priests, 94 sisters and a crowd of St. Mary's parish-



ioners, celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving. One week later, June 21, 1955, the church was dismantled for renovation purposes. Pews, altars, confessionals and hardware around the interior were removed, and installation of new terrazzo floors incorporating radiant heating ducts was underway. Cost of the renovation project totaled \$175,000. While church renovation was in progress, the school gym was used for holding services. An open house was scheduled on September 28 and 29 for the public to see the renovated church.

Meanwhile properties along Decatur and Madison Streets were purchased. The better homes on that site were moved to the south side of Decatur Street placing the funded debt to \$400,000. Plans were also underway to construct a caretaker's residence and cemetery office at Calvary Cemetery beginning in early 1956.

In the spring of 1956, plans were made for constructions of a new 12-room elementary school building. A campaign for funds was executed in May

and \$260,000 was pledged. Bids were received September 27 and the contract awarded for \$405,000. Ground was broken for the new school on October 10, 1956. Students were admitted to the new school on September 4, 1957, blessed by Bishop Rehring on November 27, 1957, and the total indebtedness was \$505,000. By 1960, elementary school enrollment reached 1,060 with the high school at 415 students. By 1965, total indebtedness was reduced to \$88,000. It seems that the guidance of Msgr. Inkrott was one of extreme building. Unfortunately he suffered a coronary attack on July 20, 1965. To aid his recovery, Msgr. retired in 1967 as pastor of St. Mary's. Msgr. Albert Sprenger was appointed pastor September 1, 1967. Two weeks after the new pastor arrived, Msgr. Inkrott died suddenly in the parish rectory September 22, 1967. His achievements as our shepherd will always be remembered. He is buried in Calvary Cemetery, Sandusky.

Entering an era of changes in previous Church ideals, Monsignor Sprenger came to St. Mary's with an ambitious ability to meet the newly developed norms of Vatican II. Unfortunately, his death limited a long productive pastorate.

Born in Port Clinton, Ohio, on September 24, 1907, he attended schools there for his elementary and high school education. He enrolled in St. Charles College in Cantonville, Md., and later attended St. Gregory Seminary and Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Cincinnati.

After his ordination to the priesthood, on May 26, 1934, Father Sprenger would find his assignments in many parishes of the diocese. His first assignment was at Huron St. Thomas Aquinas, Toledo, St. Joseph's, Fremont and St. Agnes, Toledo. Having served his associate duties in these respective parishes he became pastor of St. Ignatius, Oregon, St. Ann's, Toledo, and finally St. Mary's in September of 1967. With his pastoral duties at St. Mary's, Msgr. Sprenger accepted the position of Dean of the Sandusky Deanery.

Though inheriting the administration of a modernized parish, which had been executed by his predecessor, Msgr. Sprenger felt the need to expand facilities at Calvary Cemetery in 1968.

While returning from Toledo one evening, he died at the wheel of his auto at the outskirts of Sandusky on August 30, 1971. Burial was in Calvary Cemen-



tery, Toledo. Although his presence at St. Mary's seemed short, Msgr. Sprenger will be remembered for his positive accent in developing a congregation of believers.

Father Donald E. Mohr succeeded Msgr. Sprenger to lead the people of St. Mary's. Born November 4, 1924, he was ordained to the priesthood on May 18, 1950 by Bishop Karl J. Alter. His first assignment at St. Clements, Toledo, began a chain of various appointments at St. Ann's, Toledo, St. Vincent de Paul, Toledo and St. Agnes, Toledo. Before his assignment at St. Mary's, Fr. Mohr held pastorships at St. Stephen's, Republic, St. Boniface, Oak Harbor. On December 3, 1971, he became pastor of St. Mary's, Sandusky. Three years after his appointment to St. Mary's, the ambitious Fr. Mohr was transferred as pastor of St. John the Baptist, Landeck, with St. Patrick, Spencerville as a mission. Presently, he is pastor of St. John's Parish, Lima.

Interested in the education of young adults, Fr. Mohr guided the program to build a new science wing on property of the school which was previously used as a playground for the elementary school. Paid from parish reserves, the cost of constructing the new building was approximately \$249,000. The classroom phase of the new building houses the science department with labs, music rooms for choir and band, and rooms for language arts.

Father Mohr bade farewell to St. Mary's on Sunday, October 20, 1974, in the school cafeteria. He accomplished significant projects during his brief pastorate, most notable being the effective formation of the Parish Commissions, centralization of the high school, and cemetery renovation. His homilies, always of a positive accent, as he delivered them in the nave of the church among his congregation, were inspiring in their enthusiastic delivery. Indeed, he portrayed a true messenger of God and a pastor of St. Mary's.

Robert Donnelly, a native of Toledo, and presently pastor of St. Mary's, was born March 22, 1931. Having completed his elementary and high school training in Toledo, he entered St. Meinrad Seminary, Indiana for college training and later attended Mt. St. Mary's Seminary, Cincinnati, for his theological studies. After his ordination on May 25, 1957, Fr. Donnelly was assigned as associate pastor of St. Wendelin's, Fostoria, until 1965. He was then asso-

ciate of St. Charles, Toledo, and became associate of St. Clement, Toledo in 1967. Having a particular interest in high school education, like his predecessor, Fr. Donnelly taught at Cardinal Stritch High School in 1969. In 1970, he was appointed as pastor, St. John Baptist, Landeck and St. Patrick, Spencerville, where he remained until October 20, 1974, when he was named pastor of St. Mary's Sandusky.

Father Donnelly inherited both an aggressive parish and a debt of \$400,000. Undaunted, he consulted with the Parish Council and Finance Committee and after much consideration, consented to a Fund Drive, known as the Immediate Action Drive, to disintegrate the terrible burden of indebtedness. The drive, which was put on in 1976, proved to be quite successful, and as a result, pledges exceeded \$540,000. This positive response by the people of St. Mary's indicates that sacrifice and pride is much alive in our parish. As a form of follow-up to the 1976 fund drive, a stewardship program was initiated in the Spring of 1978, resulting in increased Sunday weekly offerings.

Centralization of the high school had been perfected and when coupled with the continued elementary school enrollment, St. Mary's standards will be positive for some years to come in the educational enterprise.

Following the encouragement of the Ohio Education Department officials in Columbus, Ohio, as well as their recommendation that Central Catholic High School facilities be further enhanced and developed through additional expansion, a drive is being executed to assist the economy of such expansion. The initial program provides for classroom and sport facilities.

In the summer of 1980, another program was added to St. Mary's Parish. A weekly bingo game for people in the Sandusky area is provided every Wednesday evening.

Bingo workers are provided by the people of our parish — those who volunteer, and, have a good time.

There is no doubt that the achievements and guidance of our pastor, Fr. Donnelly, have been to promote Christian brotherhood. We are a very proud congregation to have him as our shepherd. May the Lord provide him with many happy days at St. Mary's and a future filled with peace and joy.





### Assistant Priests

The Reverend F. Mettenich was the first coadjutor assigned to St. Mary's in June 1874. In April of 1875 he was appointed pastor of Keweenaw Island and Mission, and he left the parish of St. Mary's which left St. Mary's without an assistant for eight years.

Since that time St. Mary's has been blessed with a host of active associate pastors who have labored for periods varying from three months to 14 years and have thereby furthered their experience as a priest engaged in service to the Lord's vineyard.

Aptly we can only borrow the words written

"Much of the success of a general depends on his subordinates." But the verdict of the ages has ever been that "To the general goes the glory." So it has ever been in Christ's Army, and so it comes to be that the merits of the staff officers (and for our purposes we call them "associates") are usually merged in the merits of their chiefs or "pastors."

Because there have been so many associate pastors of St. Mary's it would be hard to give adequate recognition to the splendid work performed by them. Their memory, however, is and will be present in the good of St. Mary's Parishioners.

## Deacon Program

The ministry of the diaconate is a very important phase towards the ordained priesthood. During their internship, deacons are alerted to the day-to-day activities occurring in the parish. To the advantage of our parish, St. Mary's has been blessed to have had seven deacons assist our community.

Programs involving youth, education, liturgy, visitation, scripture and others have provided a sound development of the 20th century priest. We are proud to list the names of those deacons who participated in our parish program with heartfelt thanks.

1974 Michael Hohenbrink  
1975 Richard Liston  
1976 Richard Bennett  
1977 David Tscherne  
1978 Steven Renauer  
1979 Joseph Steinbauer  
1980 Stephen Stanbery

As we have scanned the profiles of various pastorships, let us not forget those who have been called to the service of the Lord from our own congregation. We remember in a special way, those from our parish who have died in the priesthood.

Rev. Ambrose Weber  
Rev. Francis X. Braeunig  
Rev. Herman Cable  
Rev. Frederick Bertram

Rev. Kenneth Moore

Rev. Paul Scales, O F M

Presently, St. Mary's has 6 of its members active in the religious service of God.

Rev. Benedict Ringholz

Rev. Stanley Kromer, O. Carm

Rev. Richard Olelamacher, Crozier

Rev. Frank Mouch

Rev. Sylvan Obergefell

Friar Alfred Sartor

With the last member having been ordained in 1958, St. Mary's Parish has two students studying for the priesthood presently.

Charles Singler, son of Mr. & Mrs. Charles D. Singler has just completed his college seminary training at St. Gregory Seminary, Cincinnati, and will continue his theological studies at Mt. St. Mary's, Norwood, Ohio.

Joseph Manner, son of Mr. & Mrs. Paul Manner, will be entering the Pontifical College Josephinum, Worthington, for college studies in the 1980-81 school year.

It is our hope, a parish of believers, that these young men find peace and happiness in their vocations to the priesthood. Although we many times alert ourselves to the declining number of vocations, let us continue to pray for vocations in our parish and the universal church.

— Carl Kromer, Charles 'Chas' Singler





# Sisters

When we think of the history and growth of St. Mary's parish through the past 125 years, we must stop to think of the great influence on our lives in the presence of the Sisters of Notre Dame. From their first year here in 1893, until the present time, these dedicated women have done much more than educate our children. They have been a beautiful reflection of Christ's love for all of us, co-workers with us in any parish undertaking throughout the years, and an example in Christian Living.

Throughout their 86 years here, countless sisters have ministered in this parish. In 1893, when a shortage of teachers caused the Ladies of the Sacred Heart to leave our parish, 10 Notre Dame Sisters were sent from the Cleveland diocese to teach at St. Mary's. They were: Sisters Mary Ignatia Superior until 1899, Mary Medarda, Mary Florentine, Mary Adelheidis, Mary Carmella, Mary Marianne, Mary Alferia, Mary Eustella, Mary Sixtine, and Mary Hortuiana.

There were nearly 600 children that first year housed in two schools, a boys' school, east of the old church on Jefferson Street, and a girls' school, located in the present convent. The sisters lived in a small frame house to the east of the boys' school.

With the strong comradeship of the early Germans here, it is not hard to imagine these sisters in their classrooms, with strictest discipline, teaching the little ones their prayers . . . "Vater unser der du bist im Himmel."

As the parish flourished, the need for a better and bigger school facility was seen, and in 1909, the Rev. Joseph S. Widmann laid the cornerstone for

our present school. Upon its completion, the sisters moved into their present home, complete with a chapel.

The years have come and gone, and 87 of those years have seen the quiet influence of the sisters. The seeds of their unselfish example of sacrifice have grown and taken root in thousands of our children. Since 1895, more than 50 young ladies of our parish have chosen to follow the examples set by the sisters.

Sister Mary Lemant said she was "impressed by their joyfulness . . . because they loved what they were doing." Sister Mary Charleen recalled "being a 'church girl' since third grade. As we cleaned the church, I recall Sister Mary Hildaline talking aloud, and very intently to Jesus as she dusted the altar."

Sister Mary Lemant and Sister Mary Charleen are both Sisters of Notre Dame, both from St. Mary's parish and both are the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Hug. They both were impressed with the sisters' happiness in all they did. "We had a chance to





become familiar with their way of life. On Saturdays we'd go with Sister Hildaline to the basement to do the laundry, to the garden, or the porch at recreation time. We saw them at work and at play. We were almost one of them and they were like us. We looked forward to being with them."

Sister Mary Samuel, another daughter of the parish said her father prayed daily that God would bless his family with a sister or a priest. Her father, along with Monsignor William C. Zierolf and the rest of the parish, must have been very proud in August 1928, when she and four other girls from Sandusky took part in entrance and profession ceremonies at Notre Dame Novitiate.

Through the years, many things have changed, both secular and in the church. The sisters' way of life has changed too. Sister Samuel says she is quite

comfortable with the new style of dress, but she hopes they will always keep a habit of some sort as a symbol of their religious life.

She adds, "We are what we are in accordance with Vatican II." Sister Lemant said, "The rules of the order have been clarified to give us the religious freedom to live out the spirit of religion in our lives. Now there is a deeper understanding."

Sister Charleen added, "We are more in touch. Though the sisters were interested in outside things, it seemed as if they would be in a world of their own. Vatican II painted a more human picture of things."

Through all the years, through all the joys, through all the hardships, the sisters kept their priorities, God and the children, in their minds. They have served both God and this parish faithfully.

As faith in God and hard work carried our fathers

through the last 125 years, let us keep our faith in God, in hard work and in the ever present influence of the sisters as we look forward to the future

— Mary Singler

Sunday Gospels about the works of Jesus often left me wondering why God doesn't "miracle" in our 20th Century and the marvelous stories of the Old Testament only added to my curiosity about His seeming inactivity and silence. It has taken many nudges to make me faintly suspicious that God IS "miracling" in our world yet today. One of the nudges was the song "Miracle of Miracles," celebrated by an otherwise timid tailor in *Fiddler On The Roof*. Because Motel had experienced love given and returned, he weighed the wonder in his simple life as being equal to any of the great works God had performed in the past. In watching Motel's joy, I have come to wonder if having-an-eye for miracles doesn't depend on knowing the past and being in love with the One Who actively shapes it.

Our parish anniversary calls for reminiscing and for celebrating the past 125 years. It also calls us to keep ourselves open to the surprise of becoming aware that miracles have happened while our history was being formed.

If you are skeptical about my perception, allow me to share one miracle I am involved in and know first hand — it is the convent roof of St. Mary's Parish. My 20 years as a religious have not dulled my wonder that so many women can live under one roof AND it can stay in place. This has been one of my greatest proofs that there is a God and that He is busy!

If your image of the convent is tranquil gardens sparkling fountains, blossom-scented air, placid prayers, twittering birds and black gliding figures, you will be, I am certain, amazed that I call the convent a 20th century miracle.

Let me celebrate the wonder of God by giving you a glimpse of the every-dayness that miraculously happens in the stone building of 514 Decatur Street. The usual 5:15 a.m. house bell causes the same startling effect as being caught in a phone booth with a trumpeting elephant and this initiates a variety of responses among us. A few sisters are so alive to a new day they've been aroused by pre-5:15 alarms while the stay-up-late-at-night group





subconsciously has adrenaline aroused from a stupor which only caffeine will fully touch at 7:00. The variety continues in the speed with which each arrives at chapel within 30 golden minutes. The more agile among us can get the preliminaries of breakfast ready and pray a rosary before Office begins and the less agile arrive by radar control just in time for the first song — usually. Before the total gathering is completed, windows have been opened to cool the warm and then closed to warm the cooled — perhaps, opened again.

At that point of the day, our community must appear challenging to the Lord from His tabernacle-point-of view. For still another day He must do the miracle of putting opposites together. The 70-year-old sister who has taught 50 years must have the patience to listen to the achievements of the 23-year-old who's making her maiden voyage on the crest of education — a seaworth vessel giving the right-of-way to a shiney new rowboat?! The zip-zip-let's-get-it-done sister must do a mutual "gear shifting" to meet the pace of the plod-plod-why-not-wait-sister. The let's-play-tennis (after a long school day) person may have to tone her ambitions while the I-want-to-just-sit-and-exist meets the former in a mild ping pong game.

The diversity of backgrounds adds an element of complexity to His job of creating harmony and He must certainly pause in suspense when the middle of a family of 16 begins to tell an affluent, only child how a project should be done. Consider His degree of suspense if the former is younger! His gift of give-and-take has to be applied to the intricacies of moving 16 sisters in various locations by means of one car (and this includes the miracle of finding a gas station open so that "E" doesn't register for the next set of travelers.) He must answer the sensitive question of what tempo of music should be played in recreation when one teacher just checked a pack of papers and found that 80 percent had failed while another received a thank you note from a parent who compliments her on outstanding work with children.

Of course every family has its differences in character, temperament, likes and dislikes; but who, other than God, could take the diversity and independence of a group of women and call them to become community? Miraculous!

And, perhaps, one of the most astounding works

He accomplishes in our convent is to grace us with fidelity — Him to us, us to Him, and us to one another. This gift is truly worth our celebration at this time of anniversary; and while we reminisce over a 125 years of parish life, we sisters likewise rejoice in the 50 years that Sister Mary Consolatis has been mirrored by God with the gift of fidelity in religious life. Many of her 50 years have coincided with the past history of St. Mary's Parish and so it seems that we have a fine excuse for saying: "Praise to God for all the miracles He has done in St. Mary's, in our convent and in Sister Mary Consolatis!"

— Sister Mary Ligouri

## Sisters of Notre Dame

|      |                           |               |
|------|---------------------------|---------------|
| 1872 | Sister Mary Agatha*       | Theresa L.    |
| 1873 | Sister Mary Agatha*       | Mary Krebs    |
| 1874 | Sister Mary Agatha*       | Mary Kretsch  |
| 1875 | Sister Mary Margaret*     | Hilda Kopp    |
| 1876 | Sister Mary Bernice*      | Faye Yost     |
| 1877 | Sister Mary Agatha        | Verla Boehm   |
| 1878 | Sister Mary Elizabeth*    | Emma M. Boehm |
| 1879 | Sister Mary Regina        | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1880 | Sister Mary Mary*         | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1881 | Sister Mary Agatha*       | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1882 | Sister Mary Charlotte     | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1883 | Sister Mary Veronica      | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1884 | Sister Mary Regina        | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1885 | Sister Mary Elizabeth     | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1886 | Sister Mary Agatha*       | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1887 | Sister Mary Sarah         | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1888 | Sister Mary Matthew       | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1889 | Sister Mary Walter        | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1890 | Sister Mary Agatha        | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1891 | Sister Mary Elizabeth     | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1892 | Sister Mary Sharon        | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1893 | Sister Mary Elizabeth     | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1894 | Sister Mary Catherine     | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1895 | Sister Mary Margaret Ann  | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1896 | Sister Mary Teresa        | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1897 | Sister Mary Maria         | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1898 | Sister Mary Anna Theresa  | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1899 | Sister Mary Barbara       | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1900 | Sister Mary Regina        | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1901 | Sister Mary Catherine     | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1902 | Sister Mary Elizabeth     | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1903 | Sister Mary Elizabeth     | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1904 | Sister Mary Kenneth       | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1905 | Sister Mary Sarah         | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1906 | Sister Mary Camilla       | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1907 | Sister Mary Pauline Marie | Lucy Kopp     |
| 1908 | Sister Mary Debra         | Lucy Kopp     |

\* deceased

**Sisters of Notre Dame Presently at St. Mary's**

Sister Mary Dona, Sueprior  
Sister Mary Delore  
Sister Mary Lenarda  
Sister Mary Immaculee  
Sister Mary Ligouri  
Sister Mary Virgin  
Sister Mary Andrae  
Sister Mary Paulena  
Sister Mary Marsia  
Sister Mary Margery  
Sister Mary Consolatis  
Sister Mary Rosalyn  
Sister Mary Joella Marie  
Sister Mary Aaron  
Sister Mary Marilyn  
Sister Mary Jaculin

**Daughters of the Sacred Heart**

1860 Miss Kern  
1862 Miss Magdalen Schmidt  
1869 Miss Mary Scheid  
1880 Miss Martha Homegardner  
1880 Miss Mathilda Windau  
1880 Miss Helen Moes  
1883 Miss Ann Szendry

**Sisters of the Holy Humility of Mary**

1920 Sister Mary Catherine Singler

1921 Sister Mary Seraphine Herb

1922 Sister Joseph Marie Good

**Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine**

1912 Sister Mary Calista Link

1923 Sister Mary Charlotte Krupp

1925 Sister Mary Elouise Good

**Sisters of Charity, Mount St. Joseph, Ohio**

1947 Sister Mary Marilyn Lermann

**Sisters of St. Joseph**

1915 Sister Mary Renat Fox

1921 Sister Mary Norberta Fox

**Sisters of St. Dominic**

Sister Rose Marie Ostheimer

1915 Sister Gemma Perini

1947 Sister Mary Jacqueline Stang

**Sisters of St. Ursula**

1895 Sister Mary Amadeus Link

1933 Sister Mary Teresita Manner

**Sisters of St. Francis, Tiffin, Ohio**

1937 Sister Mary Florian Young

1941 Sister Mary David Young

1942 Sister Mary Eugenia Young

1945 Sister Mary Francine Sartor

1954 Sister Mary Dionne Sartor

**Sisters of the Most Precious Blood**

Sister Rogata Bollinger

**Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania Ohio**

Sister Mary Suzanne (Burch)



**A Vision  
For The  
Future**



A Parish is like a family. Various ages, likes and similarities, tastes, traits and differences exist side by side. Parish history resembles family generations. Characters, stories, life and death, flaws, successes, disappointments and joyful memories abound.

Of great treasure for family and parish life alike has been the cultural and ethnic supports that characterized the last century years. Today with a weakening of those cultural traditions and supports the erosion of rooted family ties and influences, the mobility of society, all these converge to make even more difficult Christ's call to be His people, a Christian community, mirroring His presence in our time.

Written records and memories and to some extent buildings tell us what our parish was. Each of us can offer our own judgment on what it is today. The

future is beyond and we can only dream. Allow me to share with you a view of today, but especially a direction, a vision, a hope, a dream, for our parish.

The following is a shared vision. Several of our staff and parishioners helped fashion this vision. Theirs, and my view and judgments of the present may seem stark and critical. But this vision and dream abounds with Christian hope and a lively sense of a community of faith filled people.

— The Rev. Robert W. Donnelly

### Christian Community

Christian Community is Christ made visible in this world, a sign of God's love, a symbol of His covenant with all people. It is the result of unity.

*God has sent each member of the body in the place He wanted it to be... that there may be no dissension in the body, but that all the members may be concerned for one another. If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members share its joy.*

*1 Cor. 12:18, 25-26*

In our present community we do not see Christ made visible on a daily basis. We honestly do not see a true Christian interaction. We see people who fail to see their own uniqueness, talents and charisms. We see people who are alienated — the elderly, divorced/separated, single, widowed, young adults, poor, sick and newcomers. We see people who have become very interdependent at all times.



Christian Community. We see people who are too parochial, who fail to be open to others. We see people who are locked into a religion of words and mechanics, who have no personal sense of Christ. We see people who are afraid of the burdens of the Church. We see a lack of trust in our people. We see a lack of unity.

The people of St. Mary's are called to live Christian Community, a living community that portrays the very presence of Christ in all that its members say and do on a daily basis. St. Mary's can be a source of love and life for all of its members. Only then will we see people who see their uniqueness, their talents and their charisms come alive in this community. We will see people who are no longer alienated but reconciled and accepted in this community. We will see people who are dependent upon this community for strength as a Christian alive. We will see people who have an open mind and an open heart to all others. We will see people who are guided by the spirit of the law, able to make prudent Christian decisions. We will see people who can understand their own humanness and the humanness of the Church. We will see a people who trust, who love, who care and who recognize their own strengths.



and weaknesses, and so realize their need for communion with one another, through and in the Lord

### **Ministry**

Ministry is the loving response of the Christian to the needs of God's people

*It was not you who chose me, it was I who chose you to go forth and bear fruit. Your fruit must endure, so that all that you ask the Father in my name He will give you. The command I give you is this, that you love one another*

*John 15: 16-17*

At St. Mary's we see a lack of awareness of what is meant by Church. We see an insulated faith which is kept to itself and not shared with others. A result

of this is that there is neither a ministry to the unchurched in the area, nor to the alienated people in our parish. We see only a few people engaged in ministry. It seems that the same people are doing everything; the same leaders, helpers and families who are always visible. We see small things getting in the way of the larger picture which prevents an ordering of priorities of the ministry needs of the parish. We see a lack of ministry to family, a lack of thorough ministry to the sick and aged, a lack of lay involvement in liturgy, religious education and parish organizations. We see a distrust of recent changes and catechetics. We see a limited, overworked leadership which is thrust into that state





because of the belief of people that "Father knows best!"

Our dream is that our people will see our parish will be a positive influence on the Sandusky community. There will be an understanding of the ministry of all Christians. More people will be involved. Needs will be discerned and met as they arise. There will be concern for renewal and rebuilding the weak and those of little faith. In this community there will be an increased awareness of Christ acting through the Church. There will be direct attention by our Christian Community to the quality of family life, to awareness of sick, the elderly, the underdog and the rejected. This will be a parish where the laity will recognize their priesthood of service in liturgy, religious education and parish organizations. All members will indeed minister to each other.

### Worship

Worship must be central to the Christian community, the event where Christians gather to give thanks and praise to their God for having been found worthy to stand in His presence and serve Him.

*Where two or three are gathered in my name  
there am I in the midst of them*

— Matt. 18:20

At present we experience our sacramental life as not being as fully alive and as up to date as it could be. Our sacramental celebrations do not express the faith experience of the people as is evidenced by boredom, coming late, leaving early, minimal singing and responding, feeling of self-consciousness which inhibits participation, an atmosphere of unfriendliness and generally a lack of awareness of Christ in us, with us and acting through us, His

people. Because there is a mere "attending" at liturgical celebrations by our people it takes on the appearance of merely fulfilling an obligation with little or no awareness that this sharing of our common faith in Jesus Christ is an integral part of our life.

We envision all liturgies becoming expressions of our people. Worship will be a celebration full of joy in the Lord's presence with all giving praise according to their own unique gifts. Our liturgical celebra-



tions will be characterized by a joyful voice made unto the Lord. People will linger after celebrations because they have become deeply aware that this has indeed been a celebration rather than an obligation. In essence, worship for our people will spill over into every aspect of our daily lives calling us to prayerful living day by day.



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